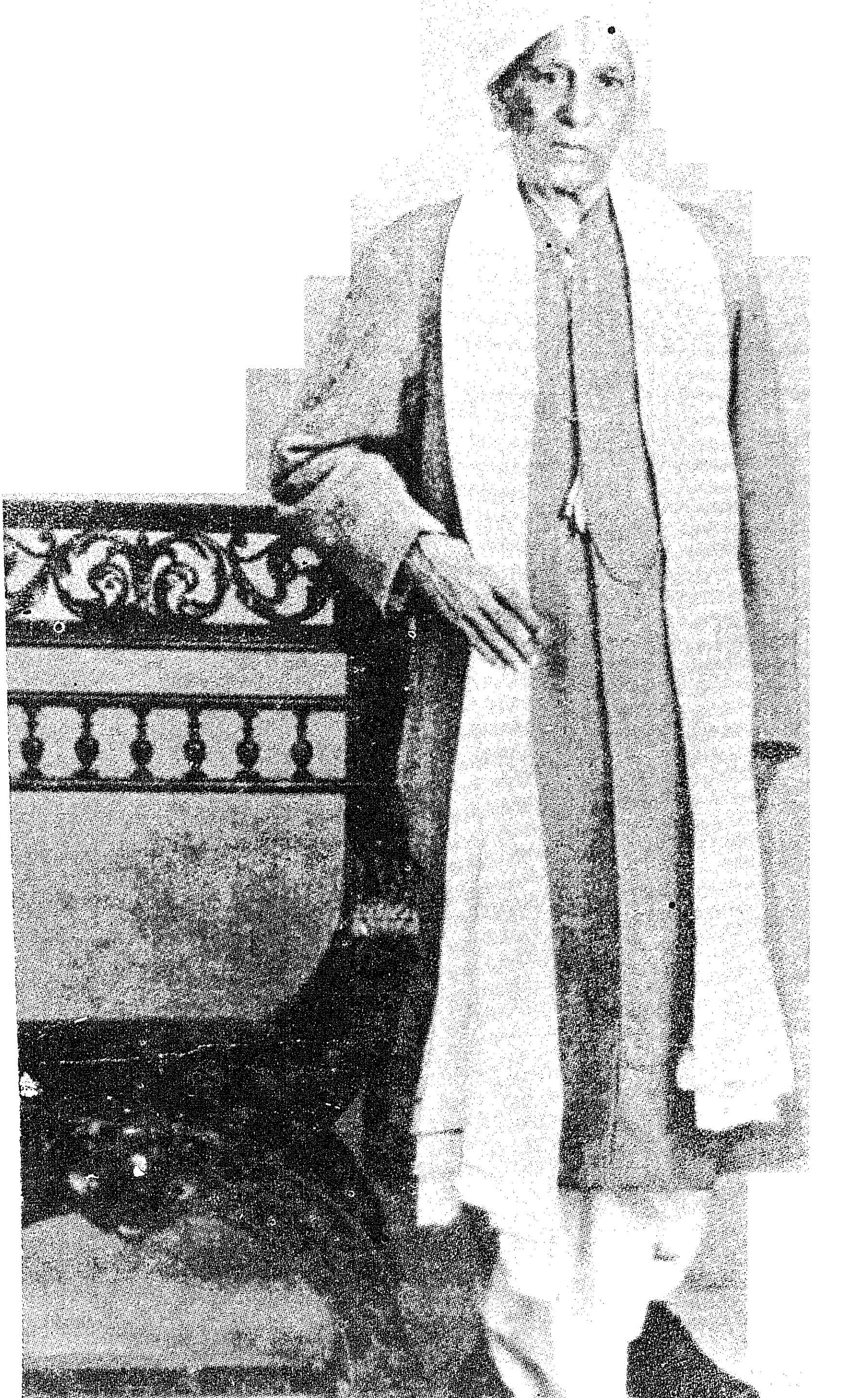


DAWN AND ACHIEVEMENT

OF

INDIAN FREEDOM

BEING THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

Dr. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR - PATRIOT AND THINKER

BY

R. T. PARTHASARATHY, M. A., B. L.,

ADVOCATE

Rs. 7/8.

1953

COPYRIGHT

20349

PRINTED AT THE COURT PRESS, JOB BRANCH, SALEM ((S. India)

TO

SITA

MY MOTHER

GANDHIJI'S TRIBUTE TO VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR

"Sri Vijiaraghavachariar had become almost an institution. He was a great patriot and a great fighter for India's freedom. It was under his Presidentship the Congress adopted non-violent non-cooperation as its creed. Sri Vijiaraghavachariar had great belief in the doctrine of non-violence and he applied it to the affairs of the world. I know that he had a soft corner for me in his heart".

PRESIDENT OF INDIA

"I am glad that Shri Parthasarathy, Vijiaraghavachariar's grandson, has written his biography which will give younger generations a glimpse into the life and working of one of the early stalwarts of the Congress".

NEW DELHI,
December, 18, 1950.

Rajendra Prasad.

PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

"It was my privilege to know and work with Shri Vijiaraghavachariar for many years and I have a vivid recollection of those days. I should like to pay a tribute to the fine quality of his mind and to his unswerving devotion to India's freedom".

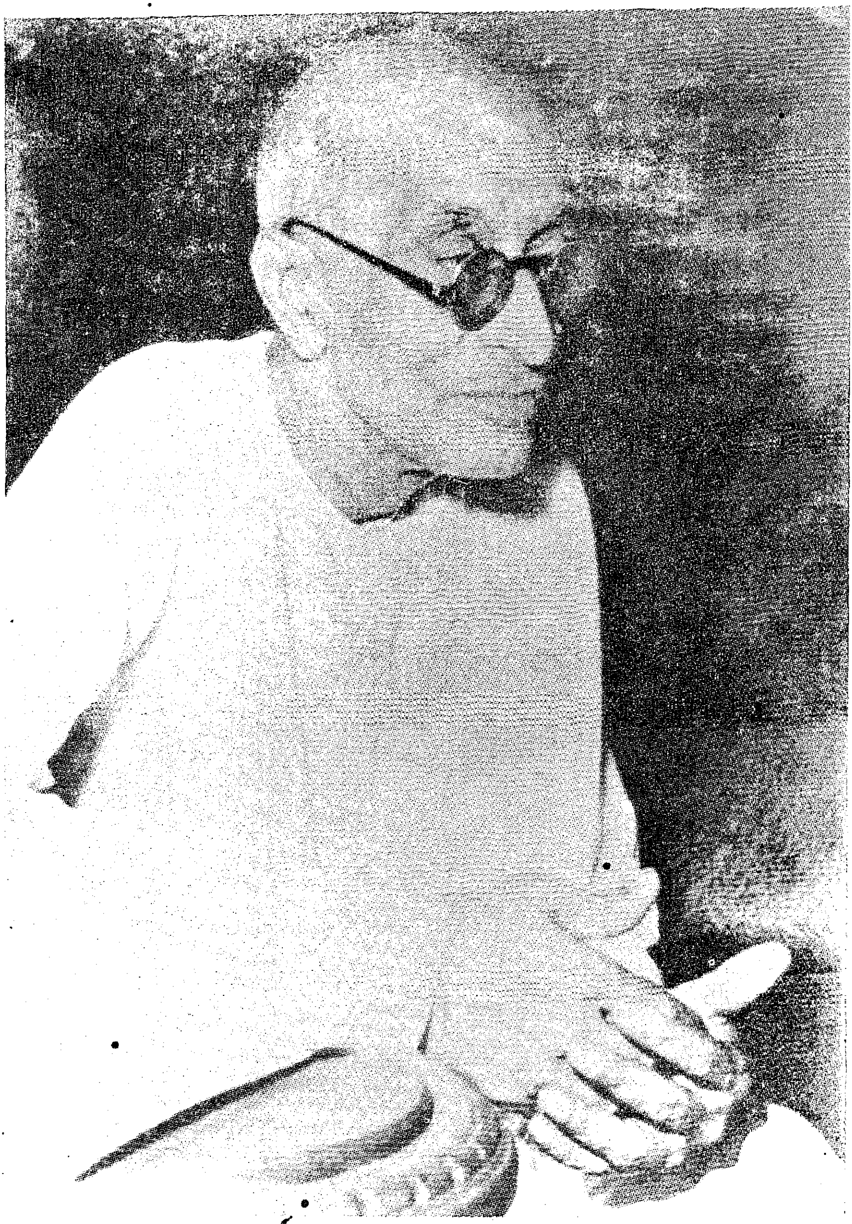
Jawaharlal Nehru.

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

Minister for Education, Government of India

"I am sure the book on the life of Dr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar, a respected friend of mine, will be warmly welcomed by the country".

A. K. Azad.



C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

FORMER GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

FOREWORD

Vijiaraghavachariar was the pride and glory of South India for the past sixty years. He was one to whose undaunted courage and parliamentary skill India owes a very great deal. Nurtured in the traditions of civil liberty as expounded by the political philosophers of the 19th century, he was its greatest exponent and defender among all Indian politicians throughout his life. I remember with what persistence he pressed for the incorporation of Fundamental Rights in the Congress declaration which finally was incorporated at Karachi.

For courage in opposing the trespass of the executive authority, there was no equal to him. In every Conference where he took part he became easily the towering personality over-topping all others. Fifty years ago, he had impressed on the Bar the duty of the legal profession to take active part in and shape the politics of the country. He did this both by precept and example. His earnestness in this respect can be illustrated by what he told me as soon as I joined the Bar as a young fellow of twenty-one. He was much senior to me; but he told me as if I were of his age, that it was the duty of all practitioners at the Bar not merely to carry on their profession but to stand up for the defence of the subject against any inroads of authority and to take active part in public life for which the Bar as a class was specially

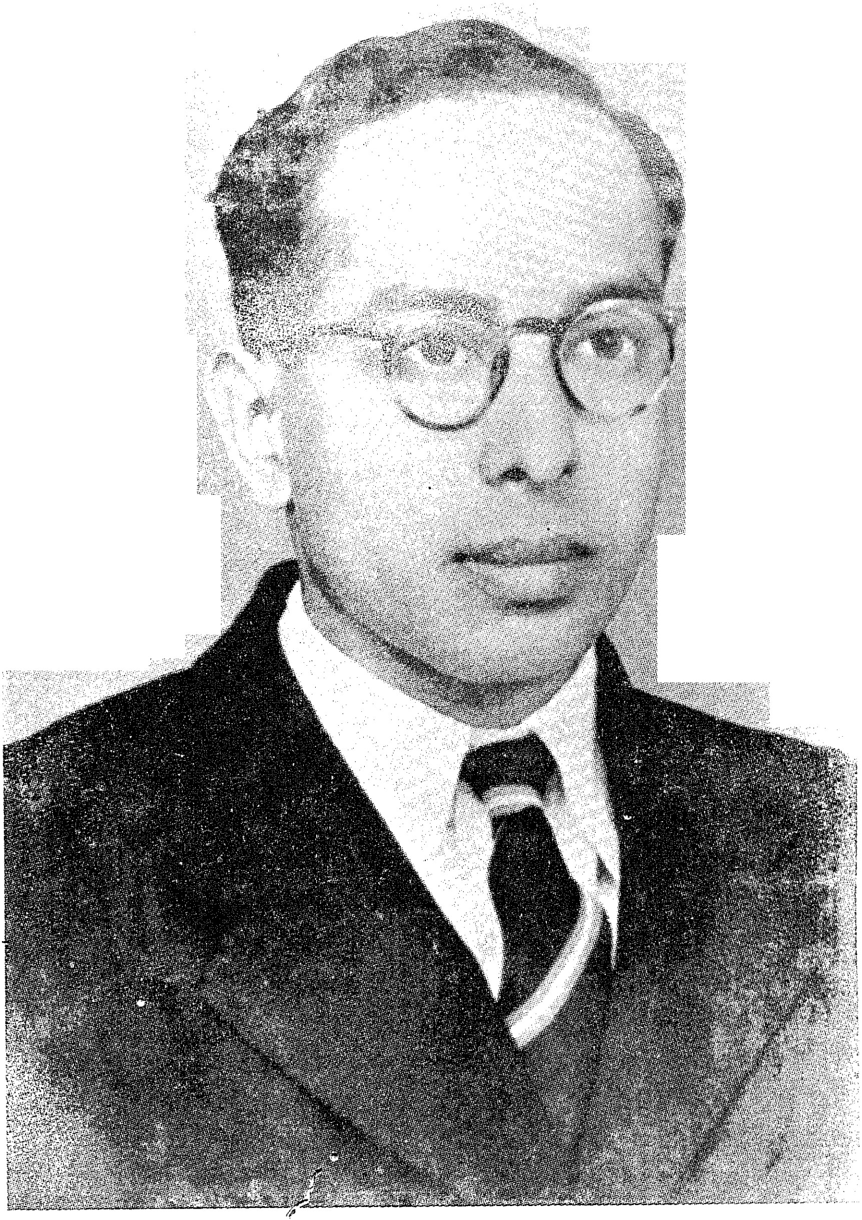
equipped. It would not be wrong if I said that this friendly advice he gave to me as a senior was the starting point of whatever activity I have been engaged in these forty years.

He was a veteran of the legal profession who set an example for the highest standards of skill and industry. I say this from intimate knowledge. Those who have worked with him or against him at the Bar were forced to work to their maximum ability.

Since 1920, politics in India took a new turn which in some ways did not quite fit in with the training and temperament of leaders who had reached the age of seventy. People, therefore, did not hear much about him as they did about younger leaders. But I know that he was vigilant and active in watching the affairs of India as managed by other people and was always ready to do whatever was wanted of him. He was the jewel of Salem and the greatest figure of South India.

NEW DELHI,
November, 20, 1950.

C. Rajagopalachari.



R. T. PARTHASARATHY

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE

The thought of writing a book about my grandfather Vijiaraghavachariar and his times, came to me during my college days. I had then the good fortune of spending sometime with Gandhiji, who happened to visit Madras in January 1946. Gandhiji, at one of my meetings at his residence, made a touching reference to my grandfather and spoke highly of his work as President of the Indian National Congress. It was then that he suggested that I should write a biography of Vijiaraghavachariar. I confessed to him that the task was beyond my capacity. But, he asserted that I was 'fit to undertake the work' and gave his blessings to me. I took the work in hand some time later and the book now offered is the outcome.

The reader will find that I have attempted to trace, as far as I could, a survey of India's Freedom Movement—from the rise to the fulfilment—and her constitutional progress for over half a century and upon this background the life of Vijiaraghavachariar is portrayed. I am aware of the shortcomings of this effort of mine. In publishing this work I am led by deep feelings of affection to one who was not only my grandfather but who was one of the founders of our Freedom, who by his efforts and those of his contemporaries, during the space of three-score years and more, made our Freedom of to-day possible.

Many who have held my grandfather in esteem and affection have given me guidance and encouragement. To them all, I am deeply indebted. I am grateful to Sri C. Rajagopalachari, former Governor-General of India, who had known my grandfather intimately and worked with him at the Bar and in the political field for over forty years, for his kind advice to bring out the book. Among others, I am beholden to Rev. Jerome D'Souza, S. J., M. A., Director of the Indian Institute of Social Order and a former member of the Indian Delegation to the United Nations' General Assembly and to Sri K. R. Ramaswami Aiyangar, M. A., B. L., M. Sc. (London) for the invaluable help rendered to me in this work.

'ARAMA',
SALEM, (S. INDIA)
August 15, 1951.

R. T. Parthasarathy.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	DEDICATION	iii
	GANDHIJI'S TRIBUTE TO VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR	v
	MESSAGES — Dr. Rajendra Prasad	vi
	,, — Jawaharlal Nehru	vii
	,, — Maulana Abul Kalam Azad	viii
	FOREWORD — C. Rajagopalachari	ix
	PREFACE — R. T. Parthasarathy—the Author	xi
I	EARLY DAYS	1
II	THE SALEM RIOTS	8
III	LAWYER AND LEGISLATOR	15
IV	RISE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS	32
V	TOWARDS NON-COOPERATION	39
VI	THE NAGPUR CONGRESS	67
VII	THE BEGINNING OF SATYAGRAHA	105
VIII	THE HISTORIC MARCH	117
IX	HINDU MAHASABHA	136
X	THE UNITY CONFERENCE	142
XI	GOLDEN JUBILEE	148
XII	CRIPPS MISSION AND AFTER	171
XIII	THE WAY TO SWARAJ	192

XIV	Ideas and Internationalism	209
XV	Man of Head and Heart	220
XVI	Last Days	247
XVII	The Achievement : A Resume	251
	Index	255
	Errata	259

ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
DR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR	Frontispiece
C. RAJAGOPALACHARI Former Governor-General of India	ix
R. T. PARTHASARATHY The Author	xi
THE HON'BLE MR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR Member of the Imperial Legislative Council	20
SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL	108
DR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR Grand Old Man of India	150
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND MAHATMA GANDHI	204
C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR MEMORIAL TOWN HALL AND PUBLIC LIBRARY IN SALEM	242
DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD President of the Indian Republic	252

I

EARLY DAYS

On August 15, 1947, INDIA BECAME INDEPENDENT. Power was transferred from British hands to Indian—an achievement made possible by the early founders of the Indian National Congress and the courageous patriots of yore. Among the great sons of India who so firmly laid the foundations of this national movement along with a few enlightened Englishmen steeped in traditions of Liberalism, was CHAKRAVARTI VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR.

C. Vijiaraghavachariar was born on the 18th June, 1852, in Maduranthakam, a town in Chingleput district in the Madras Presidency. He was the second of twelve children of Sadagopachariar and his wife Kanakavalli. While young, he was mischievous and headed batches of boys to purloin mangoes and cocoanuts from the adjoining groves and defied the gardeners, sometimes beating them and getting a good return! Sadagopachariar was a middle-class orthodox Sri Vaishnava Brahmin living in Ponvilainda Kalathur, a village near Maduranthakam. A devout Sanskrit scholar, Sadagopachariar desired that his son should also take up the study of Sanskrit. Vijiaraghavachariar learnt Sanskrit and had early training in *Vedadhyayanam*. A powerful memory and a keen intellect enabled him to profit greatly by the studies at the *Pathasala* or village school. The training in

Vedadhyayanam, he used to tell me in later days, stood him in great stead in acquiring a thorough grasp over knotty problems. Vijiaraghavachariar had covered a good portion of his study of Sanskrit and had learnt to recite the *Vedas* when in his twelfth year he decided to learn English. He knew that his father disliked the idea of his studying English and thereby breaking away from the family tradition. Yet, the urge in him for the study of English was so great that he could not delay it. One day, in the absence of his father, he ran away from home aided by a relation. While they were on the way to the town, they met Sadagopachariar returning home. Quietly, Vijiaraghavachariar got into the bullock-cart in which the luggage was placed and hid himself. The cart moved on with Vijiaraghavachariar in it and his relation following it on foot. A shrewd man, Sadagopachariar could not understand why a man should walk behind a cart. He stopped the cart, and there was his boy in it. He pulled him out and slapped him for going away from home without permission, but satisfied with the explanation given by the relative that they were going sight-seeing he allowed them to go. Vijiaraghavachariar, however, did not return home. Having made up his mind to study English, he took shelter in the house of a kind uncle who was a Tahsildar in Maduranthakam. He joined the local English school and by his efforts secured a free scholarship. Though he started his primary education very late, he was a bright student, scored distinction at every examination and more than once secured double promotion.

In 1868, he joined the Madras Pachiappa's High School. His brilliance was acknowledged by Principal Lovery. When he matriculated in 1870 he was ranked second in the Madras Presidency. Vijiaraghavachariar used to say that he lost the first rank because it was difficult to score very high marks in Tamil and Sanskrit, unlike in Latin, and that a student with Latin as his second language secured the first place. At Pachiappa's High School he won the Jayaram Chetty Gold Medal and the Special Prize for debate—the prize book being 'Poems of Lord Byron', which, even today, after the lapse of seventy-five years, is found intact as part of his library.

Even as a student, Vijiaraghavachariar was regular in his habits. He never missed his physical exercise in the early hours of the morning which kept him in good health and spirits. Before exercise, he ate a small quantity of Bengal gram soaked in red-earth and water, and drank the mineral water. Being poor and unable to hire a carriage, he walked miles to reach his school. He studied well and hard, and what was more, spent his leisure in thinking out things for himself. In 1871, he joined the Madras Presidency College. The College, founded by Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Madras, in 1840, and known as the High School, had moved into spacious premises when he joined it. Edmund Thompson was the Principal. As the strength of the College was only about a hundred, there was considerable scope for personal contact between Professor and student. Vijiaraghavachariar was fortunate in getting

to know the Professors intimately. Thompson took a fancy to him and was kind to him throughout. Once, noticing that Vijiaraghavachariar was not physically fit, he sent him with a letter of introduction to Dr. Carslaw, a well-known medical man, and got him examined. Thompson evidently suspected that he was suffering from consumption and exhibited much anxiety for him and for the safety of the other students. Happily it turned out to be only a troublesome form of asthma which persisted throughout his college career. Dr. Carslaw's careful treatment enabled him to get rid of his complaint. In spite of indifferent health he secured prizes in all the examinations. Thompson was known to be a very good English scholar who kept his students in good humour. Vijiaraghavachariar writes: "I remember once, when Mr. Thompson was giving me my prizes, his saying with the most winning of his smiles 'Take care you get another'. I came away tremendously buoyed up". So affectionate was Thompson towards him that he gratefully remembered him all his life. Porter of Kumbakonam succeeded Thompson as Principal. Vijiaraghavachariar thought him a very able man but one with strong preferences. Gordon, Professor of History, impressed him greatly with his sympathy and understanding. Vijiaraghavachariar writes: "Mr. Gordon's constant exhortation to his boys was to be manly and courageous, qualities which he illustrated from historical characters vividly. He was one of those few Englishmen who could, in those days, actually apologise to an Indian, for being hasty, unfair and offensive to him, as happened once.

Mr. Gustav Opert filled the Sanskrit Chair. His pronunciation of Sanskrit used to excite much innocent mirth among his students, who, however, loved him for his uniformly agreeable manner towards them. Of Mr. Pundi Ranganatha Mudaliar the outstanding impression I carry is the great charm of his personality".

Writing of Dr. David Duncan, Vijiaraghavachariar says: "I cannot refer to Dr. David Duncan without emotion. We became friends very early and our friendship continued unabated and we corresponded regularly until he passed away in 1923. He was my colleague in the Madras Legislative Council where he encouraged and corrected me with the freedom of an old and valued master. I was proud to receive his congratulations sent to me from his Edinburgh home after reading my Presidential address at the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress in 1920. He added playfully that if he had sat by me when I delivered that address, as he used to in the old Council days, there would have been a few occasions when he would have pulled at my coat-tails to restrain me! Dr. Duncan was a practising philosopher and disciple and friend of Herbert Spencer, a man with a serene view of life, a large heart and deep sincerity of purpose".

Vijiaraghavachariar graduated in 1875 and came out of the Presidency College with laurels. The prize-books that he got in the Pachiappa's High School and the Presidency College, viz., 'Dissertations and Discussions' by John Stuart Mill, 'Biographies' by

Francois Argo, and Sir John Lubbock's 'Origin of Civilization' are found in his library even today. After graduation, he acted as a master for a few months in the Presidency College. He left this and joined the staff of the Government College at Mangalore. On taking charge as lecturer, his first act was to break the cane that was placed on his table for maintaining order and discipline in the class-room. He told the European Principal that he did not believe in imparting education to his students by corporal punishment. He won the affection of the students and was their idol, but he was not to remain there for more than three years. Independence of spirit, which revolted against the arrogance of the European Principal full of racial prejudices, compelled him to resign his post. This he did to the sorrow of his students and to the satisfaction of his conscience. When he left Mangalore by ship, the students boycotted the classes and flocked to the pier to give their valued and kind master a touching send-off. "Can't you reconsider your decision?", asked General McDonald, the then Director of Public Instruction. "No Sir, I cannot compromise on principles". was his answer. "You must be rich", observed McDonald. "No Sir, far from it", was his reply. McDonald had great admiration for him. Vijia-raghavachariar was for some time a Lecturer in English and Mathematics in the Salem Municipal College. Later, he resigned his post and sought an independent profession. He decided on the legal profession and studied for Law for a few months privately and qualified himself as a first grade Pleader.

He chose *SALEM* as the seat of his work. In the midst of trials and difficulties, Vijiaraghavachariar never lost courage or capacity to decide things for himself. He deliberated deeply before taking a decision and when once he arrived at a decision, it was final. With such fortitude of mind, he began studiously applying himself to the profession of law at the place of his choice—*SALEM*.

II

THE SALEM RIOTS

Communal riots have been the bane of the Indian political scene during the last three score years and ten. Any rational analysis of the causative factors for this unfortunate phenomenon is not possible. Alleged bitter memories of past persecutions on the one hand and fears for the future on the other, ideological dissimilarities, racial bigotry erupting over insignificant things, have all been advanced as reasons; but whatever be the ultimate analysis, that such riots were a recurring feature was a deplorable fact.

Salem witnessed one such conflict. Hardly had two years passed after Vijiaraghavachariar joined the Bar, when riots between the Muslims and the Hindus broke out. The immediate reason for the riot was the question of music before a mosque. A new mosque was being constructed on a road in Shevapet in Salem, and there were disputes between the Hindus and the Muslims as to the former's right to conduct religious processions along that road with music. The Hindus had their right recognised by the High Court of Madras. Nevertheless, the Muslims obstructed the processions every time attempts were made to take them out. There were minor clashes between the two communities ultimately resulting in a serious riot in August, 1882. The authorities were completely paralysed. For three days, there was no British Government in Salem. Considerable damage to

property and loss of life resulted, and the mosque was razed to the ground. Troops and Special Police had to be called from Madras and Bangalore to bring the situation under control. The reverberations of the riot were such that there has not been such a conflict in Salem since then.

Vijiaraghavachariar, the young lawyer, gave professional assistance to certain Hindus accused of riotous conduct. Feelings ran high, and his services were misunderstood as partisanship, and he was singled out as a ringleader of the Hindus. His name was associated with one of the many criminal cases which arose out of the riots, and he was arraigned as an accused. The charge against him was that he personally directed, on the spot, the operation of the rioters which resulted in the demolition of the mosque in question. He was tried by H. Wigram, the Special Sessions Judge, who convicted him to a sentence of *transportation for ten years* along with one Ponnuswamy Chetty and several others on the 20th November, 1882. Imprisonment was quite different in those days as it ruined one's life and it meant social ostracism, apart from the blighting of a promising career.

The Press gave a graphic description of the Trial of the alleged rioters and of the scene in the Court, when the sentence was pronounced. The *Madras Standard*—the leading journal at that time—had an eminent reporter with experience of Old Bailey. When the judgment was delivered sentencing Vijiaraghavachariar to transportation for ten years, the

reporter gave this account of the scene in the Court: 'Judgment was delivered at 3 o'clock in the case of Ponnuswamy Chetty and nine others. The prisoners when brought in looked haggard and careworn, Vijiaraghavachari, the young Vakil, looking broken-hearted and distressed to a degree, that I, in thirteen years' experience, have never before observed in any prisoner. I have seen condemned men before the noose around their neck was adjusted. I saw Muller. I saw Youngman. I saw many others, and yet never during the course of my career as a criminal law reporter at the Old Bailey had I seen such a spectacle of dejection at an anticipated future as that unfortunate man, Vijiaraghavachari, presented on the day of his sentence'. The High Court refused him bail and he spent some months in prison.

Vijiaraghavachariar did not leave it there. He appealed to the High Court at Madras. "What is it you are reading from?", asked Sir Charles Turner, the Chief Justice, of Eardly Norton who was arguing Vijiaraghavachariar's appeal. "I am reading the arguments sent to me from the jail by the prisoner", replied Norton. Of all persons in the world, Norton, one of the ablest of Criminal Lawyers, chose to read the arguments of the prisoner which he preferred to his own. The hearing was over, and on the 9th January, 1883, Vijiaraghavachariar was honourably acquitted to the chagrin of the local bureaucrats who had counted on silencing the young lawyer, and the Full Bench paid a tribute to "the bold, manly, upright independence which, whatever other faults he may

have, the prisoner possesses to an extraordinary degree". After he came out of jail, the Chief Justice sent for him and had a long talk with him.

People who had falsely deposed against him at the instance of the then Government at last realised with whom they were dealing. Vijiaraghavachariar came out of jail and prosecuted them for perjury and got them convicted. Persons who had appeared as his defence witnesses, some of whom were Government servants, had afterwards lost their jobs as the Judge thought that they were not speaking the truth. He got them reinstated.

Vijiaraghavachariar was one of the eight elected members of the Municipal Commission (Council) at the time of the riots. On the 23rd May, 1883, the Governor of Madras ordered him to be removed from membership of the Salem Municipal Commission for he thought him to be an undesirable person owing to his alleged complicity with the rioters. The Governor-in-Council had the power to remove any such Commissioner for 'misconduct or neglect of duty'. Vijiaraghavachariar had already been honourably acquitted by the Full Bench of the High Court, and all the three Judges unanimously declared him innocent of any actual participation in the riots. Yet, the Government took such a drastic action against him. On the 8th June, 1883, he petitioned to the Governor-in-Council for information as to the grounds of his removal but was informed on the 4th July that the information could not be given. He was not a man who would leave things there. He sued the

Secretary of State for India in Council for damages amounting to Rs. 10,000 for wrongful removal. This famous case, known as *Vijia Raghava* v. *Secretary of State*[1], came up before the Full Bench of the Madras High Court consisting of Justices Kernan, Muthuswami Ayyar and Hutchins. S. Branson and E. Norton appeared for Vijiaraghavachariar and P. O'Sullivan, Advocate-General of Madras, represented the Government. The result is well-known. Vijiaraghavachariar won his case for reinstatement and nominal damages. He had vindicated his stand. Justice Kernan, in the course of his judgment, observed: "The office held by the plaintiff is one of importance in the estimate of the native community and carries with it a certain position of respect. The removal from such office by the Governor implied the censure of Government, and tended to lower the plaintiff in the estimate of the public. The plaintiff was certainly entitled to vindicate his conduct by bringing this suit, as he has done so. The defendant repudiates all suggestion of misconduct or neglect of duty. There were no emoluments or fees attached to the plaintiff's office, so that he has not suffered by the removal any pecuniary loss. The plaintiff is, however, entitled to some damages for the wrong done to him, and we award a sum of Rs. 100. The plaintiff will recover his costs of the suit against the defendant".

'With dogged resolve and phenomenal energy and faith he worked to get his co-accused acquitted.

(1) 7, Madras 466 (Full Bench)

He was greatly helped in this task by his friends here and in England. It was then that he made the acquaintance of A. O. Hume, Founder of the Indian National Congress, with whose solid support, he brought the case of his co-accused before Lord Ripon, the then Viceroy of India, and succeeded in getting them all reprieved. Such tenacity and disinterested work in the cause of justice was hardly known in those benighted times'.[1] Vijiaraghavachariar's co-accused had already been sent to the Andaman Islands in two batches. But his efforts brought them back and 'the day that these reprieved men landed in Madras harbour from the Andamans was celebrated throughout the country as a triumph of the personality of this poor and obscure young lawyer who at one bound had raised himself to All-India renown and leadership by his incomparable qualities of bravery, coolness and pertinacity'.[2] When Vijiaraghavachariar was arrested on the platform of the Madras Central Station some months earlier, *the Hindu* disposed of the event in a line. But it did justice to him by publishing a special issue to commemorate his triumph. The *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* of Calcutta hailed him as the *HERO OF SALEM*. Vijiaraghavachariar had become a man of the people whose cause he had fought for and won. He commanded respect and admiration from all sections of the people as well as the authorities. In his fight for justice he had shown himself to be a man of great courage and one who

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

(2) Ibid

would never stop his fight until justice was done. Such success might have turned the head of a smaller man. 'He showed at that critical time the mark of a genius. Undaunted by many sacrifices which he had to make in the cause of the people he pushed on with ceaseless efforts. He suffered in body, mind and pocket. In the end, he was crowned with the laurels of victory in every direction'[1] Accident threw him into public life, and he never looked back again.

(1) From a speech by Dewan Bahadur K. Sundaram Chettiar

III

LAWYER AND LEGISLATOR

Vijiaraghavachariar's early experience told him that public service could be rendered with integrity and independence only if the aspirant had disciplined himself and secured adequate financial means of his own. He, therefore, applied himself diligently to his profession. He took special interest in Criminal Law. By hard work and deep study he built up his reputation as an able lawyer. He was a master of the Evidence Act. Powerful was his advocacy. He would leave no stone unturned for the success of his case. He was not only a profoundly learned lawyer but his experience and well-chosen sympathies helped him to win the respect of the Judges, the admiration of the fellow-members of the Bar and the trust and devotion of clients.

His forensic abilities were established. It was proverbial, in those days, for the client to frighten his opponent by saying that he would engage Vijiaraghavachariar, no matter how much he had to pay him. There was hardly a case of any importance in the Districts where he was authorised to practise in which he was not engaged. Those who had known the famous Sandalwood Case of Coimbatore, the Thusur rioting and murder case, the Gobi forgery case, and the Vittampalayam murder case will remember the signal service of Vijiaraghavachariar to his clients, and how he eventually overcame great difficulties.

He was reputed for his cross-examination of witnesses. It was exhaustive but pointed and showed thoroughness of preparation. As a cross-examiner he had hardly any equal. It used to be said that if he had been in England he would have been a rival of Lord Russell at the Bar. He had such thorough knowledge of medical jurisprudence that he often embarrassed and confounded the doctors in the witness-box!

Once, he was defending a Tahsildar, in the Coimbatore district, who had been accused of corruption and bribery. The Sub-Collector, an European, was chiefly responsible for the prosecution as he had grievances against the Tahsildar who was supposed to be too independent. For hours, Vijiaraghavachariar had the Sub-Collector in the witness-box and mercilessly cross-examined him at great length. The Sub-Collector was exhausted and who obliged to ask Vijiaraghavachariar: "Sir, will you permit me to have my tea at least?". When he got down from the witness-box, he was addressed by Vijiaraghavachariar: "Mr. So and So, I hope you will live long enough to rise to the top of your service and when you do, you will be able to see the folly of your younger days". Whenever Vijiaraghavachariar appeared, Courts were packed to capacity and people came from distant parts to hear him.

Devoted to his clients, he would undergo inconveniences and travel long distances by horse-drawn carriage to plead their cause. So sympathetic was his approach to his clients that they gladly betook themselves to him. Under the mask of a rough

exterior he had a soft heart full of sympathy and anxiety for his client. His practice was lucrative and he was known for his big fees. But his noble heart had many a time come to the rescue of a poor and deserving client, regardless of any fee. Honesty and sincerity he valued most. Once, in the early years, on the failure of his client to speak the truth to him, he threw out his fees, scattering the rupee coins on the verandah of his bungalow!

It was Vijiaraghavachariar's view that the integrity of the legal profession should be maintained and that the members of the Bar should resist any attempt by the authorities to transgress their rights. Once, when a Judge, an Englishman, made unwarranted observations insulting to the Indian members of the Bar, Vijiaraghavachariar refused to proceed with his case unless the Judge withdrew his remarks and apologised to the members of the Bar. He went to the extent of saying that this matter was of grave concern to them, and that they would take it to the notice of the government if the judge did not withdraw his statement. The atmosphere in the Court was tense. Finally, the English Judge withdrew his statement and apologised to the members of the Bar. And Vijiaraghavachariar proceeded with his case.

On another occasion, at a tea-party which was arranged by the police people, the police showed scant courtesy to some of the Indian advocates who were invitees and asked them to vacate their seats saying that they were reserved for Anglo-Indians. The

Indian advocates resenting this rude treatment walked out. Vijiaraghavachariar who was also a guest at the social function, learning this told a police officer: "You meddled with these timid young men who had not sufficient grit to stand up to your insult. If I were in that place, I would have stuck up until you or I were dead on the seat". He made the police apologise to the Indian invitees for being rude to them, and asserted that in a social function no one, whether an Englishman or an Indian, could claim special privileges.

For forty years he was the unquestioned leader of the Bar. Tandoni Srinivasa Iyengar, B. V. Narasimha Iyer, T. Subramania Iyer, E. S. Ramaswami Iyer, and Pritchard, a Barrister, were his colleagues. Dewan Bahadur K. Sundaram Chettiar, who was later elevated to the Bench of the Madras High Court, and M. D. Subbaroya Iyer were his close associates. C. Rajagopalachari was junior to him by years. Vijiaraghavachariar impressed on the members of the Bar their duty to take an active part in public life and to defend the right of the citizen against the encroachments of the executive authority. This background as a lawyer helped him in his public work as a political thinker and legislator. He held the view that lawyers were especially fitted by their training and outlook to render public service, and that every person, without looking forward to retirement, should devote a constantly increasing part of his time as he grew in years to such public service.

In 1895, Vijiaraghavachariar was elected as a member of the Madras Legislative Council. Those were the days when the legislative bodies were dominated by official and nominated members. Elected representatives were few but they were men of singular ability. Under the guise of reforms anti-popular measures were rushed through the House and seldom did the opinions of the representatives of the people prevail as they were in a minority. But, they held their own and fearlessly voiced their opposition to every anti-popular legislation. Vijiaraghavachariar was one of those who relentlessly fought for the rights of the people. Among his colleagues were Sir V. Bashyam Iyengar, Sir C. Sankaran Nair, Dr. David Duncan, Dewan Bahadur Srinivasaraghava Iyengar, N. Subbarao Pantulu, K. Kalyanarama Iyer, P. Rangayya Naidu, C. Jambulinga Mudaliar and the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, great men of the past.

Vijiaraghavachariar took part in almost every debate that followed the introduction of Bills and important among them were the Malabar-Marriage Bill, Malabar Testamentary Bill, Bill to Amend the Madras Hereditary Village Officer's Act, the Post-Puberty Marriage Bill, etc. A heated debate followed the introduction of a Bill to amend the District Municipalities Act. Vijiaraghavachariar proposed elected Chairmen for Municipalities to which the Government did not agree advancing the reason of communal rivalry. Vijiaraghavachariar argued: "If the argument of Muslims against Hindus is once brought in, there is at once a death-blow given to

local self-government. The local self-government can never be enjoyed until India ceases to contain at once Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis. I cannot understand the force of the argument 'We cannot give you the privilege of election because Hindus and Muslims will come to logger heads'. Are we to wait until Hindus become Muslims or Muslims Hindus? I emphatically protest against any such argument being used in enacting such a law as this. The Municipal Council being a school for training men for local self-government should have the right to elect its own Chairman". The Government did not accept Vijiaraghavachariar's view in toto but agreed to the election of Chairman in selected districts.

V. S. Srinivasa Sastri introduced the Post-Puberty Marriage Bill in the Madras Legislative Council. Vijiaraghavachariar played a prominent role in the Council when the Bill was debated and discussed. He indulged in a lengthy argument after making a close study of all aspects of the question that the age of consent should be raised to twenty-one years. He advocated post-puberty marriages drawing his support from hygiene, Hindu scriptures and certain previous precedents. He championed the cause of Indian women and fought for their equal rights with men resting his argument on his knowledge of the law and practice of other lands. For providing a share to a daughter in her father's property, to free the woman's estate of its different restrictions and to give the right of divorce in certain cases, he desired changes in the Hindu Law.

THE HON'BLE MR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR
MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

He remained in the Madras Legislative Council for six years, and Madras elected him as its representative to the Imperial Legislative Council in 1913. Among his fellow legislators were Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Babu Surendranath Bannerji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Sir Gangadhar Madho Chitnavis, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, Malik Umar Hyat Khan, Sardar Daljit Singh, Ramaraya Venkatranga Bahadur of Panagallu, Sachidananda Sinha, M. A. Jinnah and others. Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, the Governor-General of India, was the President of the Council.

"As a legislator, Vijiaraghavachariar distinguished himself by his thorough grasp of all aspects of the questions which were brought up for discussion, by his unrivalled debating powers and by his fearless and patriotic vote. Among the many occasions when his eloquence and polemical skill stood out may be mentioned the debate on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill of 1913, otherwise known as the 'Conspiracy Bill'. An attack had just then been made on the life of the new Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, and the executive asked for summary powers to deal with the conspiracies against the State. Most non-official members feared that that was not the time to defend the liberty of the citizens but not Vijiaraghavachariar nor Surendranath Bannerji, who lent him his solitary but powerful support throughout, two heroes amidst the rest of them".[1]

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

The Home Member, Sir Reginald Craddock, introducing the Bill to amend the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, explained the new section containing the definition of criminal conspiracy which was to be added to the Penal Code and alluded to the development of the Law of Conspiracy in England. Vijiaraghavachariar, ably supported by Surendranath Bannerji, opposed the Bill arguing that it was dangerous and most inopportune, and that the principles embodied in the Bill were a substantial addition to the Indian Penal Code and it fundamentally modified its principles. He said that a very competent critic, Sir James Stephen, had pronounced the Indian Penal Code as the most remarkable and the most enduring of Lord Macaulay's works and that 'it was an ideal Code drawn by a Bacon and settled by a Coke'. It was that ideal Code which had stood the test of years and which had been the admiration of the civilized world which was proposed to be altered. He raised the question whether the subjective necessity was really identical with the objective necessity of the situation. Averring that the public had not been taken by the government into its confidence, before it had found it necessary to start that piece of highly dangerous legislation, he emphasised that no evidence had been disclosed to the Council that the measure before them was a sequel to the dastardly attempt on the life of Lord Hardinge.

Dealing with the conspiracy branch of the English Common Law, Vijiaraghavachariar proceeded to show clearly, with illustrations, how much more

comprehensive and far-reaching was the proposal in relation to the Common Law of England. Contradicting the Home Member he said that the omission of that part of the law by Macaulay was intentional and avowed. It was conclusively clear that the authors of the Indian Penal Code, the Government, and the Legislature had hitherto intentionally omitted the introduction into the system of criminal law of this country, the whole of the English Law of Conspiracy and they had excellent reasons for the omission, seeing that the framing and perfecting of the Indian Penal Code and its further amendment covered a period of exceptionally serious conspiracies. He could not accept the statement that the conditions then were different from and worse than the conditions in 1857 and 1870. Deprecating any attempt to connect that measure with the Delhi outrage, he considered that the introduction of the legislation was most inopportune, as it was prejudicial to the growth of national loyalty.

Countering the argument that the proposed legislation was only to bring about equality between the Englishmen and the Indians, Vijiaraghavachariar argued: "We ask you to let us enter the Civil Service from India. You say, 'No'. You say that such few of us as are able may enter it via London. London is the political purgatory for an Indian to enter into the heaven of the Indian Civil Service. And when these pilgrims return to India, some of whom equipped with political indulgence for entering the Civil Service, return via Paris it may be, some germs perchance

travel into India in their wake, and if these germs germinate and produce novel and dangerous conditions here and there, now and then, Government in revenge for its sins accumulate repressive laws and subject the teeming millions to those laws. I respectfully beg to enter my humble but firm protest against this kind of profession of equality between Indians and Englishmen. The vaunted equality begins at the wrong end. You would not only not let us into the Civil Service but you would not let us enter the army or the navy either, in defence of the country and the Empire".

The government had made up its mind to enact the legislation. When the Bill was actually moved by the Home Member, who, in his reply to Surendranath Bannerji, stated that the government would take the risk of working that law provoked Vijiaraghavachariar to say: "Such words would never have been uttered in former days. Such words would never have been uttered by a Bentinck or Canning, a Malcolm or Munro, a Macaulay or Peacock that government would take the risk, that government would take care of themselves and that we had better mind our own business. Such a spirit is absolutely inconsistent with the spirit of the makers of the British Indian Empire". He concluded with these words: "Where I have no power fruitfully to criticise, give me the power to lament, to be in distress, to be in grief. I therefore repeat my analogy, my grief is that of the divine child Cordelia. I hope like her and pray like her that the Hon'ble Home Member and

those who support him and share his joy at present will be involved along with the people of the country in one common ruin upon the administration of this law".

In spite of the fearless opposition by Vijiaraghavachariar and Surendranath Bannerji, the government decided to enact the measure which was a piece of panicky legislation with grievous consequences to the liberty of the individual, and it was done with the support of the great majority of the House. Was it not the time to defend the liberty of the citizens? Most of the non-official members who voted with the government failed to realise that, but not Vijiaraghavachariar or Surendranath Bannerji, and they stood out as two champions of civil rights. "The country rang with praise of this intrepid and patriotic fighter who displayed such marvellous resource and unwearying strength in trying to stem the panic-stricken government in one of its most dangerous outbursts of reactionary fury".[1] His part in the Bill has passed into history as an epic of skill and courage, of patriotism and high sense of duty.

Another occasion when Vijiaraghavachariar expressed himself with vigour was on an amendment of the Press Act of 1910 moved in the form of a resolution by Surendranath Bannerji with which he concurred. Bannerji's resolution stated that when any order of forfeiture was made under the Act, the order must state or describe the offending words or articles

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

or pictures or engravings or whatever it was upon which the local Government based its order and asked for a modification of the Act so as to empower the High Court to set aside an order of forfeiture not made in conformity with the provisions of the Act. Supporting Surendranath Bannerji, Vijiaraghavachariar asked the House to consider the question whether the Act was in accordance with the express declarations and intentions of the government. The High Court had found that there was considerable discrepancy between the declaration and the performance in respect of the enactment and the mover of the resolution asked that the discrepancy might be removed. In trying to understand their position somewhat retrospectively, they should see what those who made the law intended it to be.

He continued: "Sir Herbert Risley said that 'this Act was intended to take the place of public opinion in India; that in England there was a strong public opinion and that it was the weapon of National education in this country'. It may repress them, it may cause inconvenience to them, but to say that it would educate them was to use a language which had no meaning if it was kept in its present state. So that was the law which was to be a means of national education—a weapon of national education which would embarrass the brilliant judges of the Calcutta High Court, was an extraordinary invention worthy of the 20th century civilization". He appealed for drafting the law in such a way that ordinary commonsence could understand what was meant by it. Since

the High Court had found it *ultra vires*, illegal and void, to say that such an order was valid, was only a brilliant quibble.

Vijiaraghavachariar held the view that the executive functions of the government should remain separate from the judicial area. It has been an accepted creed in every civilized country, namely that the executive and the judicial functions should be kept apart. To a resolution, which Surendranath Bannerji introduced, asking for the separation of the executive and judicial functions of the government, Vijiaraghavachariar lent his support. It seemed to him that greater prestige would attach to the position of the executive officers if they would divest themselves of all judicial functions and leave them to magistrates and judges exclusively. Then only there would be far greater chance of really cordial relations being established between the people and the Rulers. To be at once Judge and Executive Officer did not make for the efficiency of the officer or the prestige of the government or the well-being of the people. He said: "I believe that if marriages are made in heaven, so also is this separation between judicial and executive functions ordained in heaven and we must accept it as a divine principle and give it full effect for better or for worse". He gave his opinion in favour of the separation of the executive from the judiciary when the question was before the Royal Commission.

In his view, measures which contemplated social reforms should not fall short of national

expectations and of the expectation of the Indian thinkers and leaders, whether they related to raising the age of consent or to religious endowments or other matters. From every piece of legislation, which, in his opinion, would have done harm to society, he expressed his dissent. Even the Home Member, Sir Reginald Craddock, described him as an ardent social reformer. Vijiaraghavachariar believed in providing equality of opportunity for all just as he was convinced that on the principle of equality we should raise the edifice of our society if we were to make a realistic approach towards a new social order. He desired radical changes in the social values of the community and lived long enough to see the welcome change.

In many other important pieces of legislation as the Mussalman Wakf Validity Bill, the Companies Bill, the Jail Administration Act, the Income-Tax (Amendment) Bill, and the Medical Degrees Bill he took an active part besides advocating the improvement in the growth of industries in India, the abolition of the system of Indian indentured labour, the constitution of Sanitary Board, the proper administration of Railways and of Local Bodies, the placing of the ancient and indigenous system of medicine on a scientific basis, and the representation of India in Imperial Conference. He appealed to the Government for exemption from the assessment to revenue of artificial sources of irrigation, and held the view that 'Land revenue in India was certainly a tax and not rent'. Every budget speech of his revealed the fund of information he had. His knowledge of parliamentary procedure was acknowledged by all. "It is not

parliamentary, Sir," said the Hon'ble Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, the then Finance Member, who happened to preside over the Council in the absence of Lord Hardinge. Vijiaraghavachariar replied: "No, Sir, it is parliamentary". Wilson retorted: "I sat for 14 years in Parliament and I say it is not". "You might have sat for 40 years, Sir. I do not say you have not got the right of over-ruling me but I maintain I am right", asserted Vijiaraghavachariar. After the Council dissolved, Wilson questioned Vijiaraghavachariar about it. He at once quoted chapter and verse in support of his view. Vijiaraghavachariar was a past master in parliamentary procedure and Wilson gracefully acknowledged it. Wilson once spoke of "the incisive criticism of Gokhale, the torrential eloquence of Malaviya, the journalistic thunder of Surendranath Bannerji and the emphatic utterence of Acharya".

Vijiaraghavachariar was meticulous about grammar and syntax. When the discussion turned upon some word in an enactment, he pointed to a particular expression and wanted the Council to draw the natural inference. The Advocate-General speaking on behalf of the Government replied that that expression might have been inserted by an oversight. Vijiaraghavachariar exclaimed: "You call it an oversight. I am quoting from memory. The expression occupied the mind of Sir Barnes Peacock who spent hours over it. But I could not get at the book, because the Librarian here would not oblige us". Later on Eardly Norton says of Vijiaraghavachariar in his article in

"*the Looker On*" that in stature Vijiaraghavachariar towered above the multitude and the Advocate-General resigned his post because Acharya made mincemeat of him.

Vijiaraghavachariar's repartee in word or in action was always quick. On one occasion, Lord Hardinge declared in the Council Chamber, "Now, Gentlemen, the Council dissolves". The members had not risen from their seats. Yet, Lord Hardinge put on his hat. In the twinkling of an eye, Vijiaraghavachariar rushed to the door, slipped into his Trichy shoes, came back, sat down crossing his feet and placed his turban by his side. No one there understood Vijiaraghavachariar's action but Lord Hardinge did and he immediately apologised to the Members of the Council. He said: "I should not have put on my hat as soon as I declared the Council dissolved and before the members actually rose or dispersed".

The famous 'Conspiracy Bill' was before the Council. Vijiaraghavachariar opposed it. The President asked him: "Have you got a seconder?" "I am not in the habit of canvassing for votes, Mr. President", came the quick but firm answer. However, the situation was saved by the Tikka Saheb of Nabha who seconded him. He afterwards became the Maharaja and was subsequently deposed.

One of the best debaters of his time, Vijiaraghavachariar found it easy to subdue refractory speakers by a sharp interjection which set everybody roaring with laughter. "I do not understand why my

Hon'ble Member makes much of this", said Sir Reginald Craddock, the Home Member, refering to some proposed enactment. Vijiaraghavachariar retorted: "If my Hon'ble friend and I commit burglary in Teheran—which is not unlikely—I will get seven years while he will go scot free. That is the result of this enactment". Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson in his book refers to the fact that when Vijiaraghavachariar was in the Council, the Government members could not afford to sleep. He was easily the most dreaded man in the Imperial Legislative Council.

Scrupulous study and thoroughness of preparation, uncommon debating powers and uncompromising championship of the true interests of the people marked his services as a legislator. He was not afraid to be in a minority of one when his conscience pointed to a way which differed from those of others. Vijiaraghavachariar's library still possesses the reports of the English Parliamentary Debates to which he had frequent recourse. Very few of our present legislators could equal those, who, though a handful in the Imperial Legislative Council, exercised a profound influence on government policies, an influence conditioned by the thoroughness of their arguments.

IV

RISE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

"The History of the Congress is really the history of India's struggle for freedom",[1] writes the Congress historian. The year 1885 saw the birth of this body. An Englishman, Allan Octavian Hume, conceived the idea of a natural union of organisations like the Indian Association of Calcutta, the Madras Mahajana Sabha and the Bombay Presidency Association. Hume consulted Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, on the advisability of starting a national organisation in India and he received great encouragement from him. Lord Dufferin convinced Hume that this body should be given not merely a social but a political outlook, and Indian politicians should meet yearly to ventilate their views. W. C. Bonnerjee wrote in his 'Introduction to Indian Politics': 'Lord Dufferin had made it a condition with Mr. Hume that his name in connection with the scheme of the Congress should not be divulged so long as he remained in the country, and his condition was faithfully maintained and none but the men consulted by Mr. Hume knew anything about the matter. Mr. Hume then proceeded to England to have the advice of eminent Liberals like John Bright, Lord Ripon and others. Returning to India, he took

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

active steps to convene the first meeting of the Congress in 1885.

On the 28th December, 1885, the first session of the Indian National Congress was held in the Hall of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College in Bombay. Hume was the first to speak when he proposed W. C. Bonerjee to be the President of the session. Among those who were present at this first national gathering were Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah M. Mehta, D. E. Wacha, N. G. Chandavarkar, K. T. Telang, P. Rangiah Naidu, S. Subramania Iyer, P. Ananda Charlu, G. Subramania Iyer and others. Vijiaraghavachariar was with the founders of the Congress and attended its first session.

The first Congress laid down as its objects the promotion of personal intimacy among the earnest workers in the country's cause, the development and consolidation of National unity and the establishment of personal relation among members of different races and creeds, and above all, social reform, and service to the public by native politicians. As the Congress historian says: "Great institutions have always had small beginnings even as the great rivers of the world start as thin streams".[1] Sixty-five years have passed, and the Congress has passed from the deserted plains of resolutions and petitions to the ruling power to the fertile field of Satyagraha, from the pledge 'to the attainment of Swarajya by all peaceful and legitimate means' to the achievement of complete independence.

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

The Congress is a national organization. It knows no difference between the rich and the poor, between castes and communities or religions. It has been an organization all-embracing in character, with the mission to achieve the full and free status for India and establish her independence. It has had the guidance of many patriarchs who have helped it to achieve its aim. Vijiaraghavachariar was one such; he was connected with it from its very inception in 1885. His correspondence with Hume reveals that his opinion was sought by the latter on the question whether to establish a national organization and whether it should be political in outlook. Vijiaraghavachariar told Hume that such a national organization should be political in its outlook and at the same time should look to the economic and social needs of the masses and added that the influence of such a body could then spread wide over the country.

Dadabhai Naoroji was called upon to preside over the second session of the Congress at Calcutta. Madras was the venue of the third Congress which was presided over by Badrudin Tyabji. It was considered to be important, as a Committee was formed at that session to draw up the Constitution of the Congress. The name of Vijiaraghavachariar is found among those of the members of the Committee. It was *he* who drafted the Constitution of the Congress. He performed his task with great care and ability and won the esteem of his colleagues.

The Congress marched on backed by the great force from behind, the force emanating from the

people's aspirations, guided by trusted leaders, Indian and English alike. Hume served our country in various capacities, as an official and as a non-official. Hume was the Father of the Congress. His sympathies for the Indians were well-known. His efforts to form the Indian Parliamentary Committee won the respect and admiration of the people. Hume was Vijiaraghavachariar's close friend and they regarded each other with esteem. There were differences of opinion after the Surat split as to whether the annual Congress should be held at Madras or not. Vijiaraghavachariar and some other leading Congressmen objected to the session being held at Madras, as they thought that Bengal or United Provinces would be better considering the circumstances under which the country was then placed. Hume, who was in England, learning this, wrote the following letter to Vijiaraghavachariar:

"LONDON.
5-11-1900.

My dear friend,

Though it is many years since we met or corresponded, I venture to hope that you will not have altogether forgotten me. For my part, I have always remembered you with the kindest feelings and have regarded you as one of the truest and most unselfish of the supporters of that great movement with which I have for so long been so closely connected—the Indian National Congress. It has been a great sorrow to me to learn that, at this critical period, you

have associated yourself with others, who under some, as it seems to me, mistaken conception of the real present position of our case, have thought it right to protest against the coming Congress being held at Madras.

"Looking upon you as one of the best and most independent of our Southern Indian Congressmen, and trusting to our old friendship to absolve me in your eyes from the apparent presumption of the prayer, I venture to entreat you to reconsider the question and if possible, not only to withdraw your objections to this coming Congress, but yourself to join it, and use your best efforts and your great and deserved influence to make it a complete success!

"Much, very much, will depend on this, and the effect that will thus be produced here, and no man, it seems to me, who truly has at heart the safe and orderly development of the political enfranchisement of India's many-raced population can at this juncture hesitate to stand side by side with his brethren, in this great constitutional gathering.

"I am an old man, halfway through my eightieth year now, and may never write again, and therefore, while I yet may, let me send to you and all my Indian brethren this feeble expression of my unchanging affection and my all-embracing sympathy, and if this should chance to be my last message and advice, I would

say to you and to all, Be of good cheer, never grow faint or weary in the uphill fight, stick to constitutional methods—be united—brother soldiers in one holy army, put far from you alike all selfish aim, all personal differences. Be vigilent, wise and temperate alike in word and act and as you grow in worth and in desert, be sure that a Power greater than that of Kings, or Viceroys, or Parliaments, will lead you in the fulness of time, to all that you can rightly and wisely deserve, and to all you have tutored yourselves to deserve.

Ever dear old friend,
Yours sincerely,
A. O. HUME."

Vijiaraghavachariar admired Sir Willium Wedderburn as a remarkable personality. He was regarded as a source of strength to the national organization of which he was twice President. He was chiefly responsible for running the British Congress Committee successfully. Charles Bradlaugh is well-known in Indian circles. The Congress of 1889 gave him a tremendous ovation which showed the spirit of cordiality that existed between the Indian people and this distinguished friend. Ever since, it has been known as the Bradlaugh Congress.

William Ewart Gladstone was another great figure who approved of the Congress movement and the Grand Old Man of England enjoyed real popularity in this country. We were fortunate in many of

our British friends like Ben Spoor, Col. Wedgwood, David Yule, Alfred Webb, Sir Henry Cotton, C. F. Andrews and Eardly Norton who were ardent sympathisers of the national movement and who helped the cause in India and abroad.

Soon after the birth of the Congress, Hume published three pamphlets bearing the titles 'The Rising Sun', 'The Star in the East', and the 'Old Man's Hope'. Thousands of copies were sold, and they made an immense impression on the public. Next year more pamphlets were disseminated all over the country. One of them with the title 'Kambakhtpur' was from the pen of a veteran South Indian Congressman which created popular awakening. The efforts of the leaders of the older generation enabled the Congress to impress the popular mind and carry it with it. People looked upon it with reverential eyes. They joined it to serve their motherland. They rallied round it to demonstrate before the world the power of nationalism.

V

TOWARDS NON-COOPERATION

The early years of the Congress were marked by the gradual development of national consciousness. The First Congress demanded Parliamentary safeguards against the high-handed actions of the bureaucracy. The second session enunciated council reform for increased representation of elected members. In 1890, the Congress supported the Bill to amend the Indian Council's Act which was brought in by Charles Bradlaugh, though his Bill was later dropped. Next year, the Congress told the British Statesmen that the Indians should have a commanding voice in the legislative bodies, with the result that Lord Cross's Act of Council Reform was passed in 1892. In the formative period of the Congress, the counsels of Wedderburn, Vijiaraghavachariar, Naoroji, Surendranath Bannerji and Mehta prevailed and it may be rightly said that their efforts formed the corner-stone of the national institution.

The fifteenth session of the Congress was held at Lucknow in 1899 when a Committee was appointed to popularise its mission. Vijiaraghavachariar was a member of this Indian Congress Propaganda Committee as well as of the Committee formed at the Lahore session next year, when he seconded the proposition that N. G. Chandavarker should preside over the session. The Propaganda Committee commanded a wide influence and spread the cause

of the Congress throughout the length and breadth of the country. It was as a result of their work that multitudes of people were brought within the fold of the Congress. Along with three others, Vijiaraghavachariar took the responsibility to collect sums due for the copies of *India* assigned to the Madras circle in 1901 and 1902.

The Congress of 1905 met in Benares. In spite of the persistent demands of the people and their leaders for effecting reforms in the matters of legislation and administration, the government showed slackness. So, the Benares Congress elected Gopal Krishna Gokhale as a delegate to England to urge the more pressing proposals of the Congress on the British government. Vijiaraghavachariar considered the resolution as a very important one and seconded it by an able speech in which he appealed to the British government to concede to the demands of the Indian people and recognise their legitimate rights.

Curzon's partition of Bengal in the teeth of popular opposition provoked the anger of India and the Congress started a nation-wide agitation against it. The Punjabi, Marathi, Madrasi and others joined hands with the Bengali in demanding a United Bengal. Surendernath Bannerji's speeches stirred the whole of Bengal. Earnest-minded men like R. N. Mudholkar and Bupendranath Basu asked the government to repeal this measure. Gokhale appealed to the Viceroy to conciliate Bengal. Madras did not lag behind. Vijiaraghavachariar, Krishnan

Nair and other leaders from the South voiced their vehement opposition to the hasty and ill-conceived action of the government. Lord Curzon was adamant and it was left to Lord Hardinge in 1912, to decree the re-establishment of a United Bengal. This was the first real victory of popular will over executive action in the political field.

The twenty-second session of the Congress came off at Calcutta, and for the third time the choice of President fell upon Dadabhai Naoroji. At this session, Vijiaraghavachariar moved the resolution relating to the Permanent Settlement. In his view "land in India had never belonged to the king; the sages had said that the world belonged to those who were born in it; private property was gained by cultivation; and the king, who was ordained for protection, received a share from the cultivators for his services. The idea that land belonged to the king was Western and Feudal, not Indian".

The Congress Sessions had hitherto been held in perfect peace and harmony. But, in 1907, a split occurred in the Congress ranks as a result of which the moderates dominated the field and the nationalists or extremists decided to non-cooperate. The split occurred at Surat where the twenty-third Congress met. The moderates were in an overwhelming majority, and the nationalists, though led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, were in a minority. The Surat Congress began amidst opposition which grew stronger as the session progressed. Finally, there was confusion, and after two hard days, the President, Dr.

Rashbehary Ghose, adjourned the Congress *sine die* to the disappointment of those assembled. The Congress which promised to be a brilliant success ended abruptly. The moderates wanted to revive the Congress under the name of a Convention and they met at Allahabad next year only to decide upon Madras as the venue for the next session. And for a few years, the Congress was under their guidance.

Vijiaraghavachariar was a nationalist and the moderate Congress policy did not appeal to his judgment. He, therefore, stood aloof from the Congress after the Surat split. But, though he did not take active part in the Congress affairs till his reappearance after the nationalists were admitted into the Congress by the Lucknow amendments of 1916, he watched the national movement with unabated interest.

It was during this period that important reforms were brought in and one such was the Minto-Morley Reform. The Congress recorded its strong disapproval of the creation of separate electorates on the basis of religion and of many other provisions of the new Reforms. Leaders of all shades of opinion voiced their opposition to the system of separate electorates. Vijiaraghavachariar criticised them as they would cut at the root of the nation's unity and endanger its constitutional progress. His argument was that religion and politics should be kept in separate compartments and that the *State should be a purely secular body*. The British Government was determined to go on with their scheme in spite of the opposition of the people.

The Indians not only had to combat the high-handed actions of the Government in their own motherland but also had to resist anti-Indian sentiment in the British Colonies. The position of the Indians in South Africa raised a serious problem. Ever since 1894 the South African situation was drawing the attention of the Congress. The treatment accorded to the Indians there was detestable and there was an uproar from the settlers. The Indian settlers were denied the rights of citizenship and were heavily burdened with disabilities. The Union Government was not prepared to remedy the evils and the settlers had to live amidst the most humiliating conditions.

But there arose a man to fight the Union Government, to fight racial superiority and colour prejudice. Who knew then that he was to be the greatest leader of India and one of her noblest sons? He was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. M. K. Gandhi appealed to the Indian Government to interfere in South African affairs and remedy the situation. He wrote letters to Indian leaders asking them to evoke popular opinion in support of the Indian settlers' cause. Vijiaraghavachariar received one such letter from him in which Gandhiji asked him to take up the South African question in the various Legislative Councils in India and to move the Viceregal Council to act in the matter.

Gandhiji's organised passive resistance movement shook the authorities. Indians, men and women, in hundreds were incarcerated. They would

rather be inside the prison walls than remain outside and submit to legalised slavery. Gandhiji's method of passive resistance and the courage with which men and women practised it, were looked upon with amazement by the South African Government. The Indians received the sincere support of Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, who at last succeeded in bringing the South African problem to a solution, though temporary in character. The struggle had a great influence on the growth of India's national life.

Tilak joined the Congress at Lucknow along with other nationalists. Vijiaraghavachariar was back in the Congress front. The Lucknow session was a unique one as it approved of the scheme of Self-Government for a United India jointly presented by the Congress and the All-India Muslim League. The Congress historian says: "The great achievement of Lucknow was the completion of the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms with a full formation of the Hindu-Muslim concordat".[1] The unceasing efforts of Tilak, President Ambika Charan Mazumdar, Dr. Rashbehary Ghose, Surendranath Bannerji, Jinnah, Gandhi and others brought in a united Congress once again. Jinnah was largely responsible for bringing the Muslim League nearer the Congress and it was but fitting that Mrs. Sarojini Naidu called him then 'the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity'.

The part played by Vijiaraghavachariar in the Imperial Legislative Council during the years 1913–16

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

brought him universal praise and he was hailed as a doughty champion of people's rights. The Press was loud in acclaiming his services. His name received the foremost consideration for the Presidentship of the Congress. '*The Leader*' of Allahabad in the course of a leading article, wrote: "............ All things considered we do not hesitate to suggest the election of the Hon. C. Vijiaraghava Achariar for this year's Presidentship. A Congressman since the year 1887, one who gave practical proof even earlier of the possession of intrepid public spirit, a fearless member of the Madras Legislative Council for six years and of the Imperial Legislative Council for the last three and half years, the President of the Madras Provincial Conference sixteen years ago, Mr. Vijiaraghava Achariar has age (he is 63), ability and experience on his side, and we have the fullest confidence that in him the Congress of 1916 will have a President who satisfies all the requirements. Whichever of the nominees of the various committees will eventually get the vote of the majority and be elected, will naturally be loyally supported but the man about whom one can honestly feel the greatest confidence and enthusiasm is the Hon. Vijiaraghava Achariar." Though there was a strong current in favour of Vijiaraghavachariar's election, yet Madras did not support him wholeheartedly, and without the unanimous desire of the country, Vijiaraghavachariar would not accept the Presidentship. It was due to petty differences which were made much of by those in Madras who preferred Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govinda Raghava Iyer in the place of Vijiaraghavachariar.

But for Madras's stand Vijiaraghavachariar would have been President of an earlier Congress session.

The year 1917 was full of important events. The Great War had brought stringent conditions which were keenly felt by the masses. The Congress had become united. Mrs. Besant's Home Rule movement was gaining strength. Popular agitation signalled the rapid growth of national consciousness throughout the country.

Edwin Montague had replaced Chamberlain as the Secretary of State for India. Soon after the assumption of office, he outlined the policy of the British Government as aiming at the early realization of responsible government in India. He, along with Lord Chelmsford, made an extensive tour of this country to study the political situation, meet prominent men and ascertain their views. On the 20th December, 1917, Montague met Vijiaraghavachariar in Madras. The reader will appreciate a passage from Montague's Diary relating to this interview:

> "Then I met one of the most interesting men I have come across, a man called Achariar of Salem. He is really a great man. He was a member of the Municipal Council, and was sentenced to ten years' rigorous imprisonment for a Muhammaden-Hindu row that occurred in his time. The Government dismissed him from membership of the Council. He appealed; won his appeal and was acquitted; brought actions

for perjury against the witnesses and got them condemned; sued the Government for wrongful dismissal and got damages. He is an astute thinker; he objects very strongly to all forms of imprisonment without trial. I think he is on the right lines in these things. He objects to Provincial Autonomy, and wants a development of the Government of India, with a Parliament of three hundred people, subordinate administrations, but with no sovereign powers or Legislative Councils, and the annexation of Ceylon. He is the most vigorous thinker that I have met, even though some of his ideas are impracticable".[1]

With the return of Montague to England, the country knew of the forthcoming reforms. The Congress carried on its activities. Mrs. Besant presided over the Calcutta session in 1917. It may be that she had a good following at Calcutta and at Bombay next year, but, by the end of 1918, she definitely lost ground. Leading men of thought and action could not fully agree with her. The country awaited the result of Montague's survey, and in June 1918 the Montague-Chelmsford Report was published. "It was a master-piece of literature", says the Congress historian, "and, like other political documents produced by British statesmen, it contained a dispassionate statement of India's case for self-government. Only, the obstacles to reform are described with equal lucidity and in the end the latter triumph".[2] The country was dissatisfied with the report. Marked

(1) An extract taken from 'My Diary' by Edwin Montague

(2) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

difference of opinion arose among the leaders as to how they should react towards the new reforms. The Special Session of the Congress met at Bombay under the presidentship of Syed Hasan Imam and discussed the burning question. Vijiaraghavachariar took an active part in its deliberations. The Congress repudiated the assumption of the Report that the people of India were not yet fit for Responsible Government, and dealt with it at great length. It passed a number of resolutions criticising the Montford Report and declared that, in general, it was 'disappointing and unsatisfactory'.

The ordinary session of the Congress was held at Delhi during Christmas. Tilak should have been the President but for the fact that he had to proceed to England. The great honour of Presidentship would have come to Vijiaraghavachariar if he had not withdrawn in favour of Malaviya. Pandit Malaviya made a reference to this in his Presidential address. Said he:

> "I am grateful to my esteemed friend, Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar whom I miss in the Imperial Legislative Council where his unyielding independence and incisive logic made a source of great strength to the popular cause, for having retired in my favour because his selfless anxiety for the country's cause and his partiality for an old friend led him to think that my election would serve that cause better at this particular juncture".[1]

(1) From the Presidential Address of Pandit Malaviya

The Delhi Congress reiterated the decisions arrived at the Bombay Special Session, and in certain respects it even went further.

The Peace Conference saw the termination of the Great War. Leaders thought that India's case should be forcefully represented at that Conference. Tilak appealed to Vijiaraghavachariar "to create public opinion to attract the attention of the 'Peace Conference' towards the Indian problem for the attainment of India's self-determination".[1] He wrote: "You are an influential figure who can speak with command on international issues".[2] Vijiaraghavachariar took up the suggestion and worked it up with earnestness.

The end of the Great War found no peace in India. The Congress was growing powerful. The Government disliked the spread of the movement. A tussle between the people and the government became imminent. Amidst such conditions, the government introduced the Rowlatt Bills. The Bills were framed to give wide powers to the Executive and the Magistracy. The stringent restrictions of the Bill evoked criticism from all leaders of opinion. Gandhiji was greatly perturbed over the Bills. In February, 1919, he wrote to Vijiaraghavachariar from Sabarmati saying that resistance of a most stubborn character ought to be offered to the Bill: "I appreciate your letter and it makes me feel like running down to

(1) From Tilak's letter to Vijiaraghavachariar

(2) Ibid

Madras immediately. I have been thinking of going there for a long time. The delicate state of my health has come in the way, as it still does. But unless the campaign starts immediately or unless I am obliged to go to Lucknow regarding the Brothers Ali I would certainly take the earliest opportunity of visiting Madras. I do feel that unless the Bills are radically altered in the Select Committee, resistance of a most stubborn character ought to be offered. I detest the Bills not so much for their deadliness as for their being the surest symptom of a deep-seated disease from which the Government of India must be freed if we are to enjoy a real measure of freedom under the Reforms. I hope to write to you very soon. We are having here a Conference of Gujaratis tomorrow to consider the question of Satyagraha. 'Passive Resistance' poorly expresses the meaning conveyed by Satyagraha".[1]

When Gandhiji visited Madras, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar called for a conference of leaders and Vijiaraghavachariar took a prominent part in it. Rajagopalachari was also with them. The discussion centered round the question of offering civil disobedience to the Rowlatt Bill. It was Vijiaraghavachariar who suggested to Gandhiji that it was imperative that the latter should prepare a detailed scheme of Satyagraha. Gandhiji took up the suggestion. Writing in his Autobiography, Gandhiji says: "Srijut Kasturi Ranga Iyengar called together a small conference of leaders to thrash out the matter.

(1) From Gandhiji's letter to Vijiaraghavachariar

Among those who took a conspicuous part in it was Srijut Vijiaraghavachariar. He suggested that I should draw up a comprehensive manual of the science of Satyagraha embodying even minute details. I felt the task to be beyond my capacity and I confessed as much to him".[1]

Gandhiji and the leaders decided to call for a general hartal on the 6th April as a protest against the Rowlatt Bills. Gandhiji appealed to the Viceroy not to enforce the Bills. That appeal was ignored. Gandhiji started the Satyagraha campaign and told the people to disobey the Act if it was enforced. The country wholeheartedly responded to his call.

The Punjab had its own part to play at this juncture and it was the saddest one in Indian history. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the Iron man of the Punjab, was. determined to put down the influence of the Congress in his Province. The District Magistrate of Amritsar arranged for the secret externment of two prominent leaders of the Punjab, Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, to an unknown place, which caused a tremendous commotion in the Province with the result that sporadic violence occurred in a few places. There was firing by the police in Lahore and a few other centres. Gandhiji was prevented by the authorities from entering the Province. He defied the order and was arrested and taken to Bombay. This caused more disturbances and the government resorted to stern measures by which some lost their lives and some were wounded. On account of these

(1) From Gandhiji's Autobiography

incidents and to put a stop to violence, Gandhiji suspended Satyagraha. Punjab was placed under Martial Law, and Lahore and Amritsar were openly proclaimed to be under Martial Law on the 15th April, 1919.

The dark clouds converged over the city of Amritsar. On the 13th April, which was the Hindu New Year Day, India witnessed one of the most tragic events in her long history. Twenty-thousand people, including men, women and children, were assembled at a meeting at Jallianwala Bagh. This Bagh was surrounded by buildings and walls and had only one small outlet. Suddenly, General Dyer entered the Bagh with his British and Indian troops and ordered his Indian troops to fire at the crowd, keeping his British troops as stand-by. Could ever twenty-thousand people disperse in three minutes through one small outlet? One thousand and six hundred rounds were fired at the innocent gathering and the casualities were four hundered dead and between a thousand and two injured. That was the government's version. Writes the Congress historian: "The greater tragedy really was that the dead and dying were left to suffer the whole night without water to drink, or medical attendance, or aid of any character. Dyer's contention—as it came out later—was that 'the City having passed under the Military, he had tomtomed in the morning that no gatherings would be permitted and as the people openly defied him, he wanted to teach them a lesson so that they may not laugh at him. He would have fired, and fired longer, he said, if he had had the required ammunition. He had

only fired 1,600 rounds because his ammunition had run out'. 'As a matter of fact', he (Dyer) said, 'he had taken an armoured car but found that the passage to the Bagh would not admit it, and so he left it behind".[1] General Dyer's military rule over the City continued in the same brutal manner. To give a few instances: water and electric supplies to the City were cut off; people were flogged, and the crawling order was enforced.

The Punjab tragedy roused the ire of the country. Motilal Nehru, Tilak, Vijiaraghavachariar, Vithalbhai Patel, Malaviya and Lajpat Rai were enraged at the outrageous action of Dyer and they condemned it in the most emphatic terms. Sorrow and pain lay heavily on Gandhiji. He made it a national issue and the country took it up.

Against this sombre background the annual Congress met at Amritsar itself and was presided over by Pandit Motilal Nehru. The Punjab tragedy figured prominently in its deliberations. Already the Non-Official Committee's[2] findings were before it, viz., 'the admissions made by General Dyer before the Hunter Commission established beyond dispute that his action of the 13th April was nothing but a cold-blooded, calculated, massacre of innocent, unoffending, unarmed men, women and children, unparalleled for its heartless and cowardly brutality

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

(2) The Personnel of the Committee was: Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, Fazlul Huq, Abbas Tayabji and Pandit K. Santhanam.

in modern times'. The Congress called upon the government to cancel all its indemnities levied upon the people and other stringent measures. The Congress passed another resolution, mainly at the instance of Gandhiji, on the Reform Scheme. This stated that the people should cooperate so to work the Reforms as to secure the early establishment of full responsible government, and it offered its warmest thanks to the Rt. Hon. E. S. Montague for his labours in connection with them.

Among other resolutions were those on the Khilaphat, and the one on Fundamental Rights, which was sponsored by Vijiaraghavachariar. At ten o'clock in the night he pressed for the resolution and carried it through. The Congress historian says: "It only remains to be remarked that the resolution on the Fundamental Rights and economic changes was somewhat sudden in appearance before the Working Committee. The fact is that the atmosphere of the country determines the resolutions of the Congress. The question of Fundamental Rights was originally handled by Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar at the Amritsar Congress at dead of night in the bleak cold of the Punjab. Then it gained importance when he himself presided over the Nagpur Session".[1]

The Resolution on Declaration of Rights which was moved by Vijiaraghavachariar at the Amritsar Congress is given below:

> "This Congress is emphatically of opinion that in the immediate and imperative interest of

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

of this country as well as of the British Empire a statute should be forthwith passed by the Imperial Parliament to guarantee the civil rights of His Majesty's Indian Subjects and embodying the following provisions:—

(1) British India is one and indivisible and all political power is inherent in the people thereof to the same extent as in any other people or nation of the British Empire.

(2) That all Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India are equal before the law, and there shall be no penal or adminstrative law in force in this country, whether substantive or procedural, of a discriminative nature.

(3) That no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, or property or in respect of free speech or writing or the right of association except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice and as a result of lawful and open trial.

(4) That every Indian subject shall be entitled to bear arms subject to the purchase of a licence as in Great Britain and that the right shall not be taken away save by a sentence of an ordinary Court of Justice.

(5) That the Press shall be free and that no licence or security shall be demanded on the registration of a press or a newspaper.

(6) The corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any subject of His Majesty save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects.

(7) That all laws, ordinances and regulations now or hereafter in existence, that are any wise inconsistent with the provisions of this statute, shall be void and of no validity whatever".[1]

This resolution was amended by the All-India Congress Committee in 1931 at Karachi.

In Vijiaraghavachariar's view, the question of Fundamental Rights was of paramount importance. He desired that the minorities should not feel apprehensive of their security in the Republic of a Free India. Hence, he proposed the inclusion of a Declaration of Rights in the Constitution Act which would guarantee to every citizen the protection of his civic rights. He got the Congress to adopt this proposal and it forms the foundation of our Republican Constitution.

The Amritsar session of the Congress ended and the year 1920 dawned with the Punjab tragedy, the Rowlatt Bills and the Khilaphat question agitating the minds of the leaders and especially Gandhiji. He lent his wholehearted support to Mohamed Ali and Shaukat Ali on the Khilaphat question. Non-cooperation appealed to Gandhiji as the most effective

(1) From the Report of the Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, 1919

answer to these burning questions. Lokamanya Tilak did not oppose Gandhiji's new plan and he agreed to abide by the decision of the Congress. Unfortunately before final decisions could be taken Lokamanya Tilak passed away at mid-night on the 31st July. The country was plunged in deep sorrow. The entire nation bemoaned the loss of the great fighter for India's freedom and democracy. All over the land, people assembled in thousands to pay their homage to their departed leader. A mammoth public meeting was held in Madras presided over by Vijiaraghavachariar who paid a glowing tribute to the Lokamanya. He said: "You have imposed upon me a task which is as difficult as it is sad. One of the noblest of India's children is dead, rather suddenly, at a comparatively early age. Lokamanya Tilak passed away the other day. The whole country is plunged in deep and acute grief and we are assembled here to perform our duty and in its two-fold aspects. Firstly, we desire to cloth our grief in suitable expression in view to the consolation of the bereaved family and also let me add, in view to our own consolation too. That Mr. Tilak had been a favourite—a growing favourite as he grew older—with the people, with the whole people of India and especially with the masses of the people, is too patent a fact to need any testimony to prove or any eloquence to emphasise or magnify. We easily find our way to adopt this, the first resolution. In the next part, we are called upon to appoint a Committee to concert measures for the perpetuation of the memory of the great patriot. Here I feel I am unable to rise equal

to the occasion and it requires the genius and the pure love of country of a Rabindranath Tagore to do full justice to the claims of Mr. Tilak on our gratitude and on the gratitude of generations yet to be born. I have had the pleasure and happiness of knowing him for over a quarter of a century and our acquaintance which began in 1895 grew and ripened into friendship. Here, I venture to say that Mr. Tilak was one of the few people in the world to whom the reverse of that half truth, that no man is a hero in his own land, was applicable. The more I knew, the more I admired him and the more I liked to be in his company and it was not singular with me. Even his enemies, when they came near him and spent a few days in contact with him, forgot their past opinions of the man and they took to admiring him. Why is it that we should call upon the present and succeeding generations to behold the man, to contemplate his life, and to understand the meaning of his mission? Because we ought not to raise a memorial of any man merely because he is dead. In the present case, the claims of Mr. Tilak on our eternal gratitude, on the gratitude of the present and future generations, are as compact as they are great. I venture to think that he was the foremost, if not the first, to start true Indian nationalism. At any rate it was he who brought to bear upon the investigation of the higher, dangerous and complex subject, viz., the existing relations between England and India, a scientific and philosophic test. In order to investigate this relation he applied not only that capacious mindof his own but also the knowledge derived from two-fold

sources—from the political philosophers and martyrs of France, England and Italy and also from our own ancient religious literature; and he amalgamated this two-fold knowledge and evolved his own ideas, his own principles and his own plan. For he was one of those who believed that every nation of this planet which had a past of which it can be proud, every nation which contributed to the humanity of the world—not simply to the science and knowledge of the world—every nation which contributed to softening of mankind, that each one of these had its own place and India had its own foremost place in the polity of nations. So, he set to the work to find out what should be the place which India should occupy in the comity and polity of nations and he enunciated his ideas and principles with a clearness both in expression and thought not as yet reached by any of our own countrymen. It is not for me to say that the other countries haven ot produced men equal to him or greater than him. Confining myself to India I say that no body has yet reached that position. No, that is not all. Having come to the conclusion as to what should be the relations between England and India, viz., that the relations as now existing are wholly inadequate to carry out the purpose of the Government and having come to the conclusion that the present system of Government is but an out-growth, a slight modification of the mercantile system of the East India Company of monopoly, he came to the greatest conclusion, *viz.*, that any system of sound government which is at once capable of achieving its object for the millions

of this country and which is likely to be durable, must be the government based upon the power of the governed to turn out government whenever they misbehaved, based upon the further conclusion that they must have the power both constitutional and legal to replace them by more competent persons whenever they are displeased with this government. In other words he only applied to our country what other men, Burke, Locke, Montaigne, Rousseau and others, Italian and French patriots, who in giving expression to their feelings gave out their belief, that all true sovereignty is derived from the governed and that the governors are but the legal agency of the corporation of the whole people. By whatever name you call it, it means that those who run the ship of State are simply to be considered the people's agents, if you like, the people's servants. Mr. Tilak's conception of bureaucracy in India was that the bureaucracy were the servants and not the masters of the people of India. Having come to this conclusion Mr. Tilak was one of those few men with whom there was no disguising the ideas, no faltering of purpose. In his political Bible there was no chapter devoted to a discussion of plausible and pleasing tricks to delude the bureaucracy and to tickle them. It is an irony of fate that the result was that he came into very severe collision with the very people to whom the world owes the invention of responsible government which in my humble view is the most perfect as yet invented by man. The simple reason was that people once in possession of power and privileges would not part with them whatever may be their tradition

as to freedom. That was not the only tragedy. By the dazzling manner in which Mr. Tilak enunciated his propositions, while on the one hand he attracted the vast majority of the people, he alarmed powerful thinkers amongst us and whom the dazzling blinded, and consequently made them his enemies. The result was that he had the misfortune to have had two sets of enemies, Indian and European. With all this never dismayed, never daunted in the pursuit of his objective he pursued it with a singleness of purpose without looking to this or that side in his walk but faithfully to the path of progress, towards our freedom both political and economic, rooted in his strong religious convictions. From his experience of mankind he drew the conclusion that whatever be the watchfulness of Providence over the people, he helps those who help themselves, that action is our duty, fearless persistent action, irrespective of consequence, is our duty—then and not till then will the divine sanction before every great event help us.

"If you will remember his statement before Mr. Justice Devar, you will see how remarkable a man he was. When from his high position Mr. Justice Devar said to Mr. Tilak that he was going to convict him and asked Mr. Tilak what he had to say, Mr. Tilak replied: 'In spite of the verdict of the jury I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things, and it may be the will of Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free'. "I do not believe that Mr. Devar

understood their full inner meaning and the serenity of temper with which Mr. Tilak spoke those words. I have seen few men with that degree of self-possession, confidence in himself, confidence in that great beneficient sanction behind every event and every movement in the world. I have not seen a man equal to him. It has been said by a certain historian that of Sivaji, Hyder Ali and Ranjit, all great conquerors who founded their kingdom Sivaji was the greatest. It is true his kingdom also fell down but unlike others he founded a people—the great Marathi people. They are not only not dead but they are a living asset—the most valuable asset—among the peoples of India. If it is true according to this historian that Sivaji founded the people, I venture to think that Mr. Tilak founded 'the people of India'. It was Mr. Tilak, as I understand it, who first and for the first time gave form to and clothed in the most attractive garb the idea of Indian Nationalism. From the time that Mr. Tilak outgrew his parochial and provincial patriotism, he came into conflict not only with Englishmen and the bureaucracy but with some of our own eminent countrymen who, I agree, are honourable men, who also want to serve the country. By whatever name you call it, the clevage began as soon as Mr. Tilak developed himself into an Indian patriot from out of his intense patriotism as a Maratha provincial Hindu. It strikes me therefore that the perpetuation of the memory of such a man is not merely a duty we all owe him but a duty we owe to ourselves and to the children yet to be born, so that all may look at the face of this great

man and contemplate it and ask the question why is it the people have given this man a statue and what is it he has done for our country. Without meaning any offence to any one I ask you all—and I have extreme doubts as to this—whether his mantle has fallen upon anybody at all. I doubt whether a successor can be found to Mr. Tilak as he was. It is possible that his successors are the numerous progeny of the country in the generation to be born. If then you agree with me that he has left no successor, it is a greater duty on your part to perpetuate his memory to the coming generations".

Gandhiji was bent upon carrying his non-co-operation programme which was subjected to long discussion at the Special Session at Calcutta presided over by Lala Lajpat Rai. C. R. Das could not see eye to eye with Gandhiji. Opinions were divided. Logically minded men like Vijiaraghavachariar doubted the efficacy of certain parts of the programme but they well understood that they had this only weapon with which to fight British Imperialism. Gandhiji, writing in his Autobiography, says: "None the less my plight was pitiable indeed. I was absolutely at sea as to who would support the resolution and who would oppose it. Nor had I any idea as to the attitude that Lalaji would adopt. I only saw an imposing phalanx of veteran warriors assembled for the fray at Calcutta, Dr. Besant, Pandit Malaviyaji, Sjt. Vijiaraghavachariar, Pandit Motilalji and the Deshabandhu being among them".[1] Gandhiji succeeded in the end and his resolution was carried.

(1) From Gandhiji's Autobiography

Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation programme was intended by him as a protest against the Khilaphat wrongs, the Government's anti-popular measures like the Rowlatt Bills, and the great and grave Punjab atrocities. But it was Vijiaraghavachariar who suggested that 'Swaraj' should be the objective. Gandhiji readily accepted his suggestion. Referring to the new creed of the Congress, Gandhiji says in his Autobiography: "In my resolution non-cooperation was postulated only with a view to obtaining redress to the Punjab and Khilaphat wrongs. That, however, did not appeal to Sjt. Vijiaraghavachari. 'If non-cooperation was to be declared, why should it be with reference to particular wrongs? The absence of Swaraj was the biggest wrong that the country was labouring under; it should be against that that non-cooperation should be directed', he argued. Pandit Motilalji also wanted the demand for Swaraj to be included in the resolution. I readily accepted the suggestion and incorporated the demand for Swaraj in my resolution, which was passed after an exhaustive, serious and somewhat stormy discussion".[1] "The Congress found no course open for the people of India but to approve of and adopt the policy of Non-Violent Non-Cooperation inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi, until the said wrongs were righted and Swarajya was established".[2]

(1) From Gandhiji's Autobiography

(2) Resolution of the Congress

And to achieve their desired object the Congress recommended to the people of India,

"(a) Surrender of titles and honorary offices and resignation from nominated seats in Local Bodies;

(b) Refusal to attend government levees, durbars and other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials or in their honour;

(c) Gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by government, and in place of such schools and colleges, the establishment of national schools and colleges in the various Provinces;

(d) Gradual boycott of British Courts by lawyers and litigants, and the establishment of private arbitration Courts by their aid for the settlement of private disputes;

(e) Refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for services in Mesopotamia;

(f) Withdrawal by candidates of their candidature for election to the Reformed Councils, and refusal on the part of the voters to vote for any candidate who may, despite the Congress advice offer himself for election;

(g) Boycott of foreign goods."[1]

(1) From the Report of the Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, 1920

Further it advised the adoption of Swadeshi in piece-goods, and the revival of hand-spinning and hand-weaving in every house in India.

This formed the basis of the Non-Cooperation movement. People were informed of what was in store for them and how they should react once the final decision was reached and the directive was given. The annual session of the Congress to meet at Nagpur was to finally decide the question.

VI

THE NAGPUR CONGRESS

Whither India? Nagpur answered the question. It was at Nagpur that the most momentous session of the Congress was held. It was at Nagpur that the Congress took the great decision for Non-Violent Non-Cooperation. It was at Nagpur that the new orientation of Congress policy was decided. And it was over that session that Vijiaraghavachariar presided in obedience to the nation's call. It met at Nagpur in December, 1920. An immense gathering of over 15,000 deligates attended the session.

The proceedings of the thirty-fifth session of the Indian National Congress commenced on the 26th December, 1920, with the singing of *Vande Mataram*. After Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, had delivered his address of welcome, Pandit B. D. Shukul proposed C. Vijiaraghavachariar to occupy the Presidential Chair and he was seconded by Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai, C. R. Das, Moulana Mahomed Ali, and T. V. Venkatrama Iyer. Lala Lajpat Rai said: 'It is a great pleasure to me to rise to support the proposition that is before you for the election of Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar as President of this Session. I have only to make this one remark that in the whole country you can find no truer, braver and more devoted servant of the motherland than the President-elect of this assembly. He was and he has been for

the last thirty or forty years in the forefront of those who fought for the rights and liberties of the people at a time when there was little political awakening in this country and when there was a complete dearth of those who could bravely stand up for the rights of the people. As such we are very fortunate in having him here today to preside over the deliberations of this assembly, and I ask you to accept the proposal with acclamation".[1] Amidst deafening cheers, Vijiaraghavachariar occupied the Presidential Chair. An editorial comments: "As Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar stood up on the Presidential dais at the Nagpur Congress, in his typical South Indian costume, with the unfailing Vaishnava caste-mark on his majestic forehead, he was a most remarkable personality and shone as an intellectual giant. His great stentorian voice rang across the Congress Pandal in deliberate and clear accents".[2]

Vijiaraghavachariar's presidential address remains a monumental document. In a lengthy speech, he dealt with the various questions affecting the interests of our country, national and international, and in particular he analysed the vital question before the Congress, namely, Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Violent Non-Cooperation programme. Feeling that it was his duty as President to place the whole situation before the Congress, he expressed his considered opinion on the different aspects of Non-Cooperation.

(1) From the Report of the Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, 1920

(2) Indian Express, Madras

He declared: "The one question everywhere asked is, what is the sanction behind and backing up our demand? What is the weapon, peaceful weapon, short of rebellion, that can compel England to let us have this form of government which has been only promised to us as a dim and delusive goal to be reached by wading through unparalleled and perilous labyrinths of systems of provincial autonomy and enforced unnatural federalism? This is the most embarrassing question and I confess that I have ever felt most nervous and most diffident as often as I thought of a satisfactory reply to what appears to be the most knotty political conundrum. Yet, we must find an honest solution of the problem and on that solution hangs our salvation for ever. We must proceed to the work therefore most religiously, and most cautiously and yet with courage. I venture to submit that it would be the safest to rely upon history earnestly and in humility. To the past and to patterns and systems tested by experience to be sound or otherwise we must look for light and guidance and to nothing else if we would walk on firm and safe ground. In answer to this one vital question, the Special Congress at Calcutta recommended by a majority a programme of Non-Cooperation. It will be observed that, apart from the programme, the scope and the nature of the principle itself and the necessity for adopting it was not separately discussed and debated. As to the great necessity for the adoption by us of some such weapon as that of organized Non-Cooperation with the rulers with a view to reach our full freedom immediately, there can be no two honest

opinions. We have been petitioning and praying and agitating these thirty-five years and over for a real and substantial voice in the government of our own country, but in vain. On the other hand, the authorities here and at home have driven us to the climax of facing the consequences of our national helplessness to protect ourselves and our countrymen in the British Colonies in the possession and enjoyment of elementary rights of person and property. Nay more. While we are in grief, in universal grief, as if the whole country is one house of death, injuries and insults continue to be added and heaped upon us. Look at the compensations awarded in connection with the Punjab disturbances. Whether you consider the principle or the measure of the money compensation awarded to European sufferers as distinguished from that awarded to Indians, there is but one conclusion possible, that our rights are flouted and we are treated as sub-human beings. Look at the Esher Commission and look at the appointment of Sir M. O'Dwyer on it in mockery of our grief and of our opinion of him. Look at the memorial for General Dyer and the necessity for a Government Order to restrain the bureaucracy from subscribing to it. Look at the proceedings of the European Association of Calcutta justifying the massacres by General Dyer even at this late hour, after eminent counsel in England had declared the massacres to be wilful murders. No, the age of pious annual budgets of resolutions by us is gone for ever. We are bound, if we don't perish as a people, we are bound to think of and adopt a method to force England to let us get

into freedom at once. The question for us to consider is whether in our own interests, the principle and programme of Non-Cooperation actually adopted is justifiable and adequate for the purpose we have in view. The exact nature and scope of the principle has not been defined and it is difficult to define it. It is to be hoped that the principle is elastic enough to include passive resistance on concrete occasions and to specific measures whether legislative or administrative and also to include strikes, sectional, vocational and otherwise. You will remember that His Excellency the Viceroy in Council has pronounced the principle of Non-Cooperation as unconstitutional because it is intended to paralyse the existing administration. It is a most astounding pronouncement. His Excellency in Council, who is the man, responsible for the darkest page in the History of British India, would have done us a great service if, in the same remarkable communique he had vouchsafed for our benefit what exactly our constitution is and where it is to be found. If, for a moment, it is pretended that the constitution of England is applicable to India, would he be pleased to tell us what part of it, what principle in it, the principle and plan of non-cooperation offends? On the other hand, the whole British system of administration here rests on the basis of non-cooperation, of conqueror against the conquered, of Europe against Asia, of white people against coloured people. And several discriminatory laws in India and administrative measures bristle with sinister principles of this kind of non-cooperation and are wholly unconstitutional from the standpoint

of the British Constitution. The new diarchical systems of Provincial autonomy is one entire homage to the chronic doctrine of non-cooperation of the British bureaucracy in India with the children of the soil. It is a mockery therefore on the part of the Government to characterise Mahatmaji's principle of non-cooperation as unconstitutional. On the other hand, the essential principle of this movement being renunciation and self-sacrifice and non-violence, whereas the other doctrine of non-cooperation is aggressive, selfish, and sordid, we are entitled justly to claim that this principle of non-cooperation is sacred and directed to secure and preserve our legitimate rights and our honest enjoyment thereof. It is not in support of might versus right. We are entitled and bound to adopt such a principle without favour or fear of consequences and guided solely by a consideration of it as a means to the end of our self-preservation as a people".

Though he was in agreement with the principle of Non-cooperation, he did not share the view of the protagonists of the movement with regard to certain parts of the programme. He doubted the advantage of the clauses relating to the withdrawal of students from Government and Aided institutions, and of pleaders from the established Courts of Law. He argued that it would not be a national advantage to ask the students to leave Government and Aided institutions when they did not have alternative openings for their studies. To provide for such institutions in large numbers to cope with the situation,

a huge capital of about two hundred crores was necessary. It might not be possible for the country to supply that money in the near future. The object of the movement was to force the hands of the government to grant their very legitimate request, namely, to establish responsible government and to redress their Khilaphat grievance. 'Was it possible', he asked, that emptying Government and Aided institutions would any wise paralyse the Government here and in England in its administration and compel it to grant our object? Collateral and consequential matters have also to be considered by us in the working of the programme. It has hitherto been an accepted maxim of our political life that the students should be left in a calm atmosphere to pursue their career and that it is injurious to them and to the rising generation to draw them into the highly excitable vortex of politics which is fast changing in our country as well into party politics. Can the propaganda be carried on without violating this cardinal and very healthy maxim? We seek Swaraj. The bedrock of a healthy nation is the sound family. Will not this propaganda separate students from parents and grand-parents and from elder brothers and sisters oftener than not? How long is this process to continue if England persists, however perversely, in declining to allow us to erect our own responsible government at once? Will not, at the end of this period—none of us can say how long it will be—the country be so much the poorer and sufferer in every way by our student population being suddenly de-barred from pursuing their further career?

It would be a totally different thing if students are asked to give up Government and Aided institutions whenever and wherever national educational institutions have been fully established and are ready to receive them and educate them'.

Continuing he said: 'We *must* begin national primary education immediately. From this one standpoint alone it is for you to say whether this item of this programme should not be given up, at least, should not be suspended, till a more favourable economic opportunity presents itself. One essential condition of the success of democratic responsible government, as distinguished from aristocratic, is an intelligent and vigilant universal public opinion and this is only possible in the highest perfection in a country of universal education. Besides, a true democracy implies universal suffrage and a universal suffrage where only less than six per cent of the population receive any kind of instruction is futile and may be even at times dangerous'.

About the withdrawal of pleaders from the established Courts of Law, Vijiaraghavachariar said: "We must put the test question to ourselves how such a withdrawal of our countrymen would in the least paralyse the government and accelerate the attainment of our object. The legal profession has not been a great favourite with the bureaucracy. Now and then vague ideas were entertained by several of them of diminishing and regulating the numbers of the Bar. Is it at all reasonable and practicable that thousands and thousands of young men, educated

and equipped to become members of the bar at an enormous sacrifice in all poor and middle class families, should be suddenly asked to cut short their career and the only career for which they are fit? The sudden withdrawal of the pleaders wholesale, especially the younger ones, if practicable and actually effected, would plunge their parents and families into immense misery. Are we satisfied, that this course is necessary for securing freedom, our national freedom? Does history furnish us with any similar example? On the other hand does it furnish lessons to the contrary? The great English Constitution owes its origin and development as well to the line of great English Judges as to her statesmen and warriors. There is a close relation between the science and practice of politics and the science and practice of law. In fact, both may be described as one science, the science of distinguishing right from the wrong. Says Burke: 'He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding, than all the other kinds of learning put together'. And therefore it is we find that throughout the world the two classes, politicians and lawyers, are often identical. The great French Revolution, the dawn of modern political liberty, owed its success no less to the lawyers than to her statesmen and soldiers. The former two were mostly identical. The majority of the great Constituent Assembly of the Glorious French Revolution were lawyers. This fact had a ludicrous effect, on Burke, the great Liberal Statesman as he

was, but who suddenly became a reactionary at the time and in consequence of the French Revolution. As he was well known to be an admirer of the legal profession, when in reply to his most uncharitable attack on the doings of the Constituent Assembly he was told it was all the doing of the lawyers, he was stunned but he at once recovered his presence of mind and found consolation in his imagination that they all must be very inferior lawyers. Do you consider that this item of the programme is in greatful memory of the Constituent Assembly of immortal glory?

"This demand for the withdrawal of lawyers is further based on the ground that the movement would thereby facilitate the establishment of arbitration Courts. Here again it is for you to discuss and determine whether it is possible and desirable at the same time that the regular Courts established by law should be abolished and replaced entirely by arbitration Courts. Private arbitration is of immense value in a society. The more petty offences and plain cases of civil dispute between individuals and individuals are disposed of by private arbitration and reconciliation, the better it would be for the individuals concerned and for Society as well. But private citizens, however enlightened and experienced would not be able to handle and investigate complex cases of law involving consideration of highly delicate questions of right and wrong, arising from contract, express and implied, and from injuries voluntary, accidental and rash. Often two grave questions both as to the interpretation and validity of law, domestic

and foreign and international, arise for a decision. The handling of such questions requires skill and technical experience arising from a special and painful study of the law and jurisprudence and from experience at the bar presided over by skilled and learned Judges. What is indeed necessary for obtaining true justice is a combination of both the sets of tribunals, that is Judge and Jury. If we abolish Courts and if we abolish the profession of law, there would be a great social want which there would be no means of supplying. The result will be immediate increase of offences and criminal cases and gradual decay of national instinct for freedom. Those who have experience of Courts and of the lower strata of society know that the masses are on the one hand unable to analyse their grievances into bases for civil actions and civil remedies and on the other, little accustomed to restrain their passions and feelings of revenge and are in consequence most apt to take the law into their own hands and commit offences in supposed redress of their grievances but more really in revenge. Let us remember that, as civilization advances, injuries will be multiplied by design, accident, and oversight and great skill and ingenuity are needed to investigate their true nature and to find suitable remedies for the injured in respect of the novel injuries. Let us not forget that *Freedom means the rule of law.* But it is inconceivable that the 'reign and majesty' of law can be secured and maintained without Courts of law and without the profession of law".

What did he propose to be their programme if that programme was not adopted by the Congress? He said, in one word it was *nation-building.* They must take to nation-building at once, on a scale and in a manner to make up for the lost time and fully equal to meet the situation as well that has been caused by the bad faith and misconduct of the government. The masses should be educated in as large and fast-expanding a scale as could be achieved. The people in the British Colonies were to be repatriated. The organization of labour and the elevation of the depressed classes and the amelioration of their condition should draw their specific attention. Since they were bent on achieving immediate responsible government for their State, they should not forget that the State was not quite the nation and the nation was not quite the State. The State was an instrument for the purpose of development and welfare of the nation, and the healthy growth of both depended upon their interaction. Vijiaraghavachariar appealed to the Congress to effect organised and progressive reforms on an efficient scale, and further to extend its right hand of sympathy and good fellowship towards Social Reformers.

With the people of India thus renovated, if not reborn, into a nation, well-knit and vital, they had the means of turning, not simply the personnel of the bureaucratic government but what was still more important the non-official exploiters of this country as well, towards a new angle of vision. With that scheme they could starve the English

planters, the English merchants, traders and manufacturers in this country with increasing scarcity of labour into gradual understanding and into a satisfactory mentality towards them. These would give them power in reserve to produce national strikes of inferior and unskilled workmen in Railways, Posts and Telegraph departments and so forth. Vijiaraghavachariar said: "Let us remember that the great Bible of the Englishmen is the financial code. Financial statistics which show loss of income and which threaten progressive loss of income have far greater effect on the mental outlook and on the moral calibre of the average Englishmen than any other weapon we can conceive of. I desire that we intentionally and with set purpose make provision for gradually and rapidly affecting the income of the English exploiter in India and even of England in so far as India is her market and supplier of raw produce, in all legitimate ways, immediately by organising labour, especially unskilled labour, for the economic advancement of India at an accelerated speed and calculated at the same time to starve the foreign exploiter as stated above". It was necessary that the Congress should make arrangements for stoppage of export of raw produce and for the gradual boycott of all foreign goods and not merely British goods, as the mere exclusion of British goods would only swell the import of other foreign goods and, therefore, would check the promotion of India's economic prosperity. According to Vijiaraghavachariar, this scheme was at once capable of reconstructing and advancing the economic state of

India, and paralysing the production, the manufacture, and the sale of goods of Englishmen, and no Viceroy would have the courage to call it unconstitutional. Further, he proposed an alliance with the Labour Party in England and India's cooperation with them in their endeavours to increase their power and influence both in Parliament and outside it.

Earlier, in his speech, Vijiaraghavachariar dealt with the question of Fundamental Rights at great length and stressed its importance from his knowledge of the history and constitutions of the nations of the world. He averred that Fundamental Rights were the source of all human laws, and all machinery to enact and execute those laws must be in its nature and functions framed in consonance with the spirit and letter of those Fundamental Rights. Quoting M. Poincare who called the Declaration of Rights the 'Law of all Laws' he emphasised that every society in which the guarantee of Fundamental Rights were not assured might be said to have no constitution at all.

Turning his attention to the urgent need of establishing responsible government in this country, he criticised the Preamble to the Government of India Act of 1919 as very disquieting and designed to propose to the country only a dim and distant vision of reaching a free Government.

After making a thorough study of the constitutional problem of this country, particularly with reference to her conditions, to her history and to the

modern constitutions of the world, Vijiaraghavachariar advocated a unitary type of constitution for India, and depricated all attempts to build a federal structure. He appealed to the people to maintain unity which was the prime necessity and told them that unless they were united and unanimous in their programme to attain their goal, it was his duty to his God and to his country to say that their chance would fly away, and the vision of their salvation would only move like *ignis fatuus* approaching and receding and ever deceiving; and they should be deeply chargeable with rash judgment and criminal neglect of the God-given moment of salvation, alike at the forum of the great world and of their posterity. 'United we stand and are saved, divided we fall and perish'.

"The people of India are now placed by their rulers in an intolerable position and they are determined forthwith to make their beautiful country 'fit and safe' for her sons and daughters to live in, and any further delay in their achievement of this vital object means ruin to them and peril to the Empire, if not to the future peace of the World", he declared. They must make the British concede their rightful and legitimate demands and they had the sanction behind them in Non-Cooperation, which was adopted by the Special Session at Calcutta, and which was to be given the final shape at Nagpur. He placed before the Congress the whole situation and appealed to them to think calmly before arriving at a decision and at the same time not to sacrifice their judgment to regimentation. 'National regimentation and national lack and

atrophy of power of private judgment, history, ancient and modern, prove to be inconsistent with national freedom and national happiness and progress, if, indeed, they are not inconsistent with continued national existence'. He emphasised that whenever people refused to think for themselves and lost the habit of private judgment, their fall was signalled. He took the case of Athens and Sparta, and said: 'It is a remarkable fact that the decline of Athens and her fall date from the most glorious point in her history, namely, the period of Pericles. His brilliant genius and great character was the commencement of the ruin of the State. People adored him and trusted him and declined to judge for themselves; and the decay of the faculty of private judgment of individuals began; and, with it, began the national decline and fall'. He warned his countrymen to take care of their private judgment and ensure the nation's progress. Before Facism in its manifold shapes ever appeared as a political theory or creed, Vijiaraghavachariar's vision saw its dangers and hence his impassioned warning against regimentation.

Vijiaraghavachariar told his countrymen: "For the past two years, we have been in an increasingly critical state of our life, political and economical. I believe that the crisis has now reached its worst and the Nagpur Session of the Congress may be rightly deemed to be the Thermopylae in the History of India, certainly in the history of the Indian National Congress. I believe that it has been allotted to this great presence so to think, so to aim, and so to act as

to reap the glory of the nation-making and history-making of our beloved motherland". Characterising their fate as being chiefly in the hands of two men, Mr. Montague and Mahatma Gandhi, he appealed to Congress to frame the message to the former and that he himself would do to the latter by virtue of the confidence they had reposed in him. They should tell Mr. Montague 'Pray do', and he would tell the Mahatmaji 'Pray do not'. The Congress had to tell the Coalition Ministry that at the end of the War it was a great pity that they did not act towards them like Abraham Lincoln, and that they should not fall an easy victim to their own pre-war mentality. The immediate establishment of responsible government was their prime concern. In the process of state-making and nation-building for India, the great political maxim enunciated by Burke should ever be remembered, namely, 'Bodies tied together by so unnatural a bond of union as mutual hatred, are only connected to their ruin'. No man and no nation could wisely walk forward in the path of progress if they were not proud of their past glory and if they did not live in vivid memory of their past errors and misfortunes caused by man. No feelings of hatred or vendetta should be permitted to taint their principles and plans. The new nation of India should be built without feelings of hatred and without feelings of vendetta, externally, and with fraternity and love internally. If that was done, the British Government could be compelled to admit their sins and to admit the imperious justice of India's claim to immediate responsible government and to full power

to collect and appropriate their own taxes and revenue. In conclusion, he said: "To do that effectively on our part we must be united alike in aim and method. Here also examples of historic wisdom should alone guide us rather than any *apriori* view or alluring prophetic vision. Abraham Lincoln during all the vicissitudes of the Civil War, for which he was responsible for the sake of the emancipation of the Negro slaves, declared that he attached far greater importance to the unity of the country and that if he was put to a choice only between his two aims, American unity and Negro emancipation, he would certainly abandon the problem of emancipation partially or even wholly with a view to national integrity and union. If we are united we can tell England and only then and not till then that the three-hundred millions of India organized and united despise Irish methods and Hungarian plans for freedom but that we shall achieve our own salvation like far greater and far happier nations such as France and Italy and that if ever in our struggle for freedom methods of Sinn Feinnism should enter and poison the process it would be by England and against India and not by India against England. She already began Sinn Feinnism in the Punjab last year and the frightful horrors she committed there were more frighful than horrors, actual and reported, of the Sinn Feinns in Ireland. We would remind them too that revolutionary France 'bare-footed, bare-backed, with only bread and steel', was able to conquer Europe, because in the words of Carlyle 'The Nation has that within her which the whole world will not conquer'.

India reborn and united and speaking as one man with her banner, with the new motto not of liberty and equality only but also of fraternity inscribed on it, fluttering in every wind of heaven, can tell England: "We also belong to the species Homo. We were the first and foremost of it and we mean to be one of the foremost of it again; no more pin your faith in the political gospel of 'the man on the spot' kind. Do not be stupid any more, either now, or, it would be too late; remember that there are men everywhere in India with admiration and love to England, the greater Athens of the modern world, with sentiments not inferior to the romantic devotion of Lord Byron to ancient Athens and that the fact of the rapid success of the movement of non-cooperation and the universal desire for a sanction other than rebellion to secure our rights shows conclusively the firm loyalty of the people and that it would be unparalleled folly and atrocious and suicidal folly to attempt to keep us by coercion under plausible and captivating camouflage such as goal of responsible government, representation and a voice in the League of Nations and Empire's Conference. In one word be a good boy and be partner with us or get thee gone. And this too without a Cromwell and without shedding a drop of blood".

From 1920 onwards the Congress followed a new creed. Its object was described as the attainment of Swarajya by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means. If Mahatma Gandhi actually moved the adoption of the new creed, it was

Vijiaraghavachariar who demanded that SWARAJ should be the motive for Non-Cooperation. The Congress historian says: "It was the President of the Nagpur Congress, Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar, that demanded that Swaraj, not merely the Punjab tragedy and the Khilaphat wrong, should be the motive for Non-Cooperation. Gandhi readily agreed. His point was that if once, on a moral issue, however limited it be, be it the Rowlatt Act, the Khilaphat wrong or the Punjab atrocity, we won on the ticket of Satyagraha, Passive Resistance or Non-Cooperation, then the success would fill the Nation with self-confidence such as was generated by the success in the Transvaal and in Champaran. Intellectual India was inclined to be logically minded; and an intellectual giant like Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar could not help being rigidly logical in his view of affairs. At Nagpur, however, Gandhi had one advantage, namely, that Mr. Achariar, in spite of his lukewarm attitude towards Non-Cooperation, cooperated with Gandhi passively, and always made a point of vacating the Chair whenever a resolution came up before the open House with which he was not in agreement".[1]

The adoption of the new creed by the Congress was moved by Mahatma Gandhi who made a fervent appeal to the people to take up Non-Violent Non-Cooperation as their weapon to fight their rulers. President Vijiaraghavachariar had earnestly appealed to keep renovated and free British India as part of and partner with England. Though it was derogatory

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

to national dignity to think of the permanence of the British connection. Gandhiji did not wish to end the British connection at all costs unconditionally, but if it was for the advancement of India, he did not want to destroy it. 'There is room in this resolution', he said, 'both for those who believe that by retaining the British connection we can purify ourselves and purify the British people, and those who have no such belief'.

It was remarkable that two of the avowed opponents of Non-Cooperation at Calcutta, Lala Lajpat Rai and C. R. Das, came over to Gandhi's side at Nagpur, and it was still more remarkable that C. R. Das, who had gone to Nagpur 'to undo what was done in Calcutta' himself moved the resolution on Non-Cooperation, and was seconded by Lajpat Rai.

A story is told about this. C. R. Das had brought with him about two-hundred and fifty delegates from East Bengal and Assam to oppose the Non-Cooperation programme. Vijiaraghavachariar did not agree in certain parts of the Non-Cooperation programme and he was logically minded. Das had told Vijiaraghavachariar that at the plenary session he would strongly oppose Gandhi's move. No one knew what transpired. On a morning, at Nagpur, when Vijiaraghavachariar was in the middle of his oil-bath, unexpectedly Das came to see him, and insisted on having a talk with the President at once. Courteous as he was, Vijiaraghavachariar allowed him to take a chair outside the bath-room. And to his surprise Das told him that he had gone over to

Gandhi's side and that he himself was moving the main resolution on Non-Cooperation. It seems that there was a heated debate between the President inside the bath-room, and the Bengal leader basking in the sun outside. The exchange continued for nearly an hour after which Das left Vijiaraghavachariar when the latter told him that even if he was to stand alone, he would voice his fearless opinion and act in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

The resolution on Non-Cooperation found support in great leaders like Lajpat Rai, C. R. Das, B. C. Pal, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Moulana Mahomed Ali and Kasturi Ranga Aiyengar. Pandit Motilal Nehru lent his support to Non-Cooperation at Calcutta after Gandhiji had accepted his amendment to make the boycott of Law Courts and Colleges gradual. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in a telegram stated that he was not at all for it and that if he had been present at the session he would have recorded his respectful protest and further he was not in sympathy with the Congress Creed either. Col. Wedgewood and Mohamed Ali Jinnah were the two who vehemently opposed Non-Cooperation and the creed of the Congress. Swaraj meant to Jinnah a declaration of complete independence without the British connection and he appealed to the Congress to make a bold statement to that effect. To the impatient audience, he said: 'Mahatma Gandhi thinks that, having declared for complete independence for India, he will achieve it by peaceful means. But I make bold to

say that you will never get your independence without bloodshed. If you think that you are going to get it without bloodshed, I say you are making the greatest blunder'. And he made a personal appeal to Mahatma Gandhi to cry 'Halt'. It was unfortunate that he spoke amidst stern opposition and heckling and he even complained of being denied by the audience the liberty to speak in the language in which he thought it right. But the delegates had made up their minds and Jinnah cried in the wilderness. The resolution on Non-Cooperation was adopted.

It read as follows:—

"Whereas in the opinion of the Congress the existing Government of India has forfeited the confidence of the country; and

"Whereas the people of India are now determined to establish Swaraj; and

"Whereas all methods adopted by the people of India prior to the last Special Session of the Indian National Congress have failed to secure due recognition of their rights and liberties and the redress of their many and grievous wrongs, more specially in reference to the Khilaphat and the Punjab.

"Now this Congress, while re-affirming the resolution on Non-Violent Non-Cooperation passed at the Special Session of the Congress at Calcutta, declares that the entire or any part or parts of the scheme of Non-Violent Non-Cooperation, with the renunciation of voluntary association with the present

Government at one end, and with the refusal to pay taxes at the other, should be put in force at a time to be determined by either the Indian National Congress or the All-India Congress Committee and that in the meanwhile, to prepare the country for it, effective steps should continue to be taken in that behalf—

(a) by calling upon the parents and guardians of school children (and not the children themselves) under the age of 16 years to make great efforts for the purpose of withdrawing them from such schools as are owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government and concurrently to provide for their training in national schools or by such other means as may be within their power in the absence of such schools;

(b) by calling upon students of the age of 16 and over to withdraw without delay, irrespective of consequences, from institution owned, aided or in any way controlled by Government, if they feel that it is against their conscience to continue in institutions which are dominated by a system of Government which the nation has solemnly resolved to bring to an end, and advising such students either to devote themselves to some special service in connection with the non-cooperation movement or to continue their education in national institution;

(c) by calling upon trustees, managers and teachers of Government affiliated or aided schools and Municipalities and Local Boards to help to nationalise them;

(d) by calling upon lawyers to make great efforts to suspend their practice and to devote their attention to national service including boycott of law Courts by litigants and fellow lawyers and settlement of disputes by private arbitration;

(e) in order to make India economically independent and self-contained by calling upon merchants and traders to carry out a gradual boycott of foreign trade relations, to encourage hand-spinning and hand-weaving and in that behalf by having a scheme of economic boycott planned and formulated by a committee of experts to be nominated by the All-India Congress Committee;

(f) and generally, in as much as self-sacrifice is essential to the success of non-cooperation, by calling upon every section and every man and woman in the country to make the utmost possible contribution of self-sacrifice to the national movement;

(g) by organising committees in each village or group of villages with a provincial central organization in the principal cities of each Province for the purpose of accelarating the progress of non-cooperation;

(h) by organising a band of national workers for a service to be called Indian National Service; and

(i) by taking effective steps to raise a national fund to be called the All-India Tilak Memorial Swarajya Fund for the purpose of financing the foregoing National Service and the non-cooperation movement in general.

"The Congress congratulates the nation upon the progress made so far in working the programme of non-cooperation, specially with regard to the boycott of Councils by the voters, and claims, in the circumstances in which they have been brought into existence, that the new Councils do not represent the country, and trusts that those who have allowed themselves to be elected in spite of the deliberate abstention from the polls of an overwhelming majority of their constituents, will see their way to resign their seats in the Councils, and that if they retain their seats in spite of the declared wish of their respective constituencies in direct negation of the principle of democracy, the electors will studiously refrain from asking for any political service from such Councillors.

"This Congress recognises the growing friendliness between the Police and the Soldiery and the people, and hopes that the former will refuse to subordinate their creed and country to the fulfilment of orders of their officers, and, by courteous and considerate behaviour towards the people, will remove the reproach hitherto levelled against them that they are devoid of any regard for feelings and sentiments of their own people.

"And this Congress appeals to all people in Government employment pending the call of the nation for resignation of their service, to help the national cause by imparting greater kindness and stricter honesty in their dealings with their people and fearlessly and openly to attend all popular gatherings whilst refraining from taking any active part therein

and, more especially, by openly rendering financial assistance to the national movement.

"This Congress desires to lay special emphasis on NON-VIOLENCE being the integral part of the non-cooperation resolution and invites the attention of the people to the fact that NON-VIOLENCE in word and deed is as essential between people themselves, as in respect of the Government, and this Congress is of opinion that the spirit of violence is not only contrary to the growth of a true spirit of democracy but actually retards the enforcement (if necessary) of the other stages of non-co-operation.

"Finally, in order that the Khilaphat and the Punjab wrongs may be redressed and *Swarajya established within one year*, this Congress urges upon all public bodies, whether affiliated to the Congress or otherwise, to devote their exclusive attention to the promotion of non-violence and non-cooperation with the Government and, in as much as the movement of non-cooperation can only succeed by complete co-operatian amongst the people themselves, the Congress calls upon public associations to advance Hindu-Muslim unity; and the Hindu delegates of this Congress call upon the leading Hindus to settle all disputes between Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, wherever they may be existing, and to make a special effort to rid Hinduism of the reproach of untouchability, and respectfully urges the religious heads to help the

growing desire to reform Hinduism in the matter of its treatment of the suppressed classes".[1]

The Congress passed a resolution on the Exchange Standard. By another it extended its sympathy to the working classes and gave them encouragement. It appealed to the country to boycott the functions in honour of the Duke of Cannought. Further, it condemned the export of food-stuffs. It requested all the Sovereign Princes of India to take immediate steps to establish full responsible government in their States. The Esher Committee's recommendations were condemned. The Congress offered its support to the Indians in East and South Africa in their heroic struggle against racial prejudice and colour bar. It appealed to the people to do earnest and definite efforts to popularise the Ayurvedic and Unani systems of medicine. In particular, the Congress tendered its thanks to the Muslims for their resolution against cow-slaughter, and it recognised the great economic necessity for the protection of cattle and urged the people of India to do their best to achieve that object particularly by refusing to sell cattle or hides for export trade. And lastly, important changes were effected in the Constitution of the Congress. It was declared that 'the object of the Indian National Congress was the attainment of Swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means'. Internally, the Congress recognised its circles on a linguistic basis.

(1) From the Report of the Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, 1920

In drawing the proceedings to a close, the President, in an extempore speech, appealed to the country to stand by the Congress and give its policy a fair trial. He declared:—"My duty today is somewhat different from the duty with which you called upon me to open the proceedings. Then I was bound to lay before you the situation of our country and to lay also before you for acceptance wholly, or in part, or for rejection if you pleased, what I believed to be the views of the country—those views being not only personal but arrived at after a careful survey and scrutiny of the whole situation and arrived at, too, in consultation with friends, Hindus, Mussalmans, and even Europeans—some Europeans who are not merely amidst us but also of us here, such as Rev. Mr. Andrews. I laid before you that day what my views were.

"My duty is now different, one is personal and the other is to the country, and the latter I propose to take first, and that is to interpret the resolutions and what lies behind them, to our rulers, to the non-official Europeans and to the world. It is not the list of resolutions that you have passed that will give them any idea of the National Soul that is being roused and that is making rapid march towards the destiny which you are determined to reach under the law of God and the law to be made by yourselves untampered with by anybody outside yourselves. The national passion is roused, and, as Mahatma Gandhi pointed out, that holy fire, your enthusiasm for getting your freedom from which you have been kept out for over 170 years, has now reached a degree which, I am

sorry, the bureaucrats have not been able to see. It is this enthusiasm which is behind all the resolutions which you have passed. Interpreting the Resolutions themselves, the first and foremost is the unanimity with which you have passed all important Resolutions. I am not talking about the Resolutions on the Constitution of the Congress which you have passed to-day, but I am talking especially of the Resolutions which you have passed about Non-Cooperation and the First Article of the Creed. I may honestly tell you that when our countrymen resolved to ask me to preside over this Congress I trembled when I thought of the situation. I hesitated for three days, and while I was afraid I was buoyed up with hope and I was also inspired by my sense of duty to stand and face the situation, whatever might be the consequence. My hope was that I knew that at bottom our countrymen are both just and kind and generous and humane. I knew, whatever might be the difference of opinion, even if I did not see with you and with your trusted leaders in some matters eye to eye, I knew that the reception you would give me would be warm and from the very core of your heart. I have not been disappointed and I may go further and say, I should have been sorry if in my embarrassment I had declined the honour which you bestowed upon me, I should have lived the rest of my life, which God may grant on me, miserable life.

"The important Resolution is about Non-Cooperation. After considerable hesitation and consultation we arrived, or as far as possible, the leaders

arrived at a workable basis to the dismay of our enemies and, I hope, to the pleasant disappointment of some of those who were away from us because they thought if they had come they would not be treated, on the one hand, properly,—I am sorry to say they thought so—and on the other hand, some few feared that there might be a split. I need hardly tell you that they are all very good patriots and they must be very glad that their fears proved futile and unfounded. Coming to our enemies, I am very sorry that your Reception Committee made a mistake in my view. They ought to have invited some of the prominent bureaucrats of our country to come and sit here throughout. If they had come and been here I do not know what they would have done. They would have gone home and they would have to revise their old bible. Their old bible is that they are the Heaven-appqinted wardens of the illiterate and teeming working millions of India and that the people who started the Congress were a few, a microscopic few. If they had been sitting here all these days they would have seen that they were all living hitherto in a fool's paradise.

"What is it that has brought about this change of things? We have got now simply as delegates, apart from visitors, about fifteen thousand, a vast majority of whom are what we call ordinary people of the country, by no means the educated minority, much less the lawyer minority. As far as I could ascertain, the lawyer element has been extremely small in this Congress, this is the greatest Congress which has been held as yet in India, and I believe the

proportion of lawyers is as yet the smallest in this Congress. The delegates are about fifteen thousand and they are drawn from the whole of the country. Taking the proportion of the House of Commons—the number of members of the House of Commons is under seven hundred of the people of England and taking the proportion of the delegates of this Congress to the people of India, it is nearly three times the proportion which the number of the members of the House of Commons bears to the people of England. On the other hand, as regards the idea that the bureaucracy here are the trustees appointed—I do not know by whom—they claim that they are the trustees of the dumb millions of India; if they had come here they would have seen that it is not the few microscopic minority that leads the people but it is the people that are practically leading the leaders and I am not ashamed to say that this is the commencement of democracy, that is, the commencement of true democracy. I already said so to you the first day. Democracy means Universal education and Universal suffrage and it is very necessary that the thinkers are brought down very often from the flights of imagination and think with the people and act with the people. Under no democracy can a few people hope to be the leaders of the whole country. It will then cease to be a democracy. I have already alluded to the downfall of Athens from the time of Pericles because the people of Athens allowed Pericles to think for the whole country and they themselves declined to think and degeneracy began. Happily a contrary process has begun in India, and I am glad to see it

exhibited here. The bureaucracy, if they would see, would probably be reminded of an incident which an English wit has well described. There was a heavy storm, a terrible storm and the ocean began to rise in mighty waves. And what do you think the people who were hitherto living in safety on the shore did? They began to flee with all the things that were available. But there was one old lady who did not like to go anywhere. She did not like to run away with her things but she took her broom and went to beat the waves with a curse and with her broom-stick she wanted to beat back the raging ocean. This will be the act of the bureaucracy if they tried by repression to put back our spirit. It is impossible for them to put down the spirit that has now risen. They would be in the position of the old lady who was not only beaten back by the waves but in her attempts to beat the waves with a broom-stick and with a curse lost what she had in her cottage. She did not know where the cottage was and she was a beggar. The position of our bureaucracy would be very much like that. It is time that they revised their old ideas about us. It is time that they made a confession of their own sins. It is time that our government, even the Non-Officials and the Press here and in England, the Anglo-India Press, ceased to confess our sins for us. Let them confess their own sins for themselves and for the whole world. If they do it, then, and not till then, could there be a spiritual contentment of the noble cause which, President Wilson and Clemenceau and many others said, was looming in the horizon of freedom when the war began. When the war is

concluded we find that so many statements which invited us to sacrifice men and money have all been re-edited, and I do not know where they are, those very grand words substituted for old words. We had formerly the 'sovereignty of the people'. Now we have 'the right of self-determination'. We had other words, that each people, whatever people they may be, are to solve their own problem. This has been set aside when they dealt with Turkey. This was applied to European minorities in the Turkish territories. So far as the Turks were concerned these maxims were never thought of. In fact a part of the Treaty is that the League of Nations shall interfere with the Turkish administration in those territories on behalf of minorities. The words 'European minority' are not here, but it means European minorities.

"Today our duty is very plain. Our duty is to carry on the culture of the spirit, to carry on, to accelerate the evolution of the National ideal as you have been doing hitherto. This mass soul as distinct from the individual soul has begun to move. I want to see that it moves forward and forward and forward, and never goes backwards. Whatever may be the methods that we adopt eventually for advancing our freedom, whatever may be the exact form which may be reached by the culture of the National ideal, the grand movement of the mass-soul ought to be kept up. Unless this is kept up, if any reaction takes place, our doom is certain. Therefore, it is our duty as soon as we go home to take to the education of the masses and to see that the mass-soul receives more and more of that

fire and that impetus that it might have lacked hitherto and is purged of impurities. It is then and not till then that the country is likely to enter into what I may call the DAWN OF FREEDOM. Nagpur, as I said in my opening speech, is the Thermopylae in the history of the Congress and the country. You all know Thermopylae and the history connected with it. This is the epitaph written over the graves of those who laid their lives for the cause of the country. "*Here we die for our country's sake*". All those who may be subjected to repression if you mean to adopt and carry out the principle of renunciation and sacrifice on which you will have to act, whether you say so or not, brother and sister, mother and father, must be ready to die for our country's sake. My interpretation therefore of this Congress is that under whatever name the world may call it, whether Non-Cooperation or Passive Resistance, the people educated and uneducated, men, women and children are out for freedom, a freedom which has been denied to them these 170 years. The evils of the absence of that freedom have been accentuated these two or three years ever since the Punjab tragedy began. Our duty therefore is, independent of the particular methods that may be adopted or that may be revised from time to time, to educate ourselves and march onward and onward.

"................One other aspect of this Congress is that we have received a message of fraternity from the Labour Party in England. While I tell you that we should depend upon ourselves for the salvation it

would be unfair, it would be improper that so selfless an offer of friendship and alliance by the Labour Party should not be availed of by us and it is my wish and prayer to you that you should cultivate the camaraderie of spirit with Labour in England. Do not forget the Resolution of today. My new friend, I hope I shall live long enough to call him my old friend, Mr. Ben Spoor alluded to the resolution of the Labour Party for our freedom which was passed unanimously. That was a very rare event, and what is more, they have sent Mr. Ben Spoor here to give us their greetings. In your name, which I did not do that day, and I believe by your implied authority, I would ask Mr. Ben Spoor to convey our message to the Labour Party in England, our fraternal greetings to them, and let us hope that the friendship, that the alliance thus begun, will admit of no obstacle but everything that will promote the cultivation of that spirit between the two peoples...............'"[1]

It was but fitting that Mr. Ben Spoor, the distinguished member of the Labour Party in England, should have paid a glowing tribute 'to the genius and profound knowledge of President Vijiaraghavachariar and to the extraordinary skill with which he guided the deliberations of the Congress which had literally amazed him'. Dr. Moonje and Moulana Mahomed Ali spoke in high and affectionate terms of the President. Recalling the old Imperial Legislative Council days Moulana Mahomed Ali said that Vijiaraghavachariar

(1) Extracts from the Presidential Address of Vijiaraghavachariar are quoted in this chapter.

stuck to his guns from morning up till 10 o'clock in the night opposing every step of the 'Conspiracy Bill' that had been moved in the Council and which so many of his fellow Councillors had not the courage to oppose. He continued: 'I find that these fighting qualities of the old ancient Brahmin from the South are not lost and deadened during these years. I find that you can still fight as persistently and as successfully with your compatriots whom you have got to rule over as Chairman as you could fight against those who wanted to rule over you as the rulers of India. Although I am not here to thank you for having conducted so successfully the largest gathering that the Congress has yet known you will permit me to tell you that something is also due from you to this great Congress. I do not know how many years Providence will spare you to us. I hope you will live to be 120 years old and more. But whenever Providence may take you away from amongst your countrymen I feel certain that in the ages that are to come, your children and your children's children and their own children will remember that on a certain memorable day in the Central Provinces and in the city of Nagpur people had assembled and declared that once for all they had refused to be slaves any longer and that it was given to you to conduct the destinies and the deliberations of that assembled multitude of Indians, slaves before but slaves no longer."[1]

The end of the Nagpur Congress signalled Gandhiji's triumph. People realised a new sense of

(1) From the report of the Proceedings of the Indian National Congress, 1920.

responsibility and prepared themselves to march forward carrying the weapon of Non-cooperation. They were determined to break the chains of slavery, and be slaves no longer. Nagpur had begun to write a new chapter of our struggle for freedom.

VII

THE BEGINNING OF SATYAGRAHA

The new era saw great names in the Congress Working Committee with C. Vijiaraghavachariar as President. They were:

C. Vijiaraghavachariar	*Chairman.*
Pandit Motilal Nehru Dr. M. A. Ansari C. Rajagopalachari	*General Secretaries.*
Seth Jamnalal Bajaj Seth Chotani	*Treasurers.*

Mahatma Gandhi

Lala Lajpat Rai

C. R. Das

Moulana Mahomed Ali

N. C. Kelkar

Hakim Ajmal Khan

K. Venkatapayya

Babu Rajendra Prasad

Vithalbhai J. Patel

With such tried servants of the nation at the helm, the struggle began.

Non-Cooperation was in full swing. The country rallied under the banner of the Congress led by Gandhiji. Non-Violence was taken up and

practised by the masses with earnestness as it was the weapon with which they decided to fight British Imperialism. This was an article of faith with Gandhiji. It was not, according to him, passivity in any shape or form, but the most active force in the world. And people embraced it with enthusiasm. Students vacated the Government-aided schools and colleges. National institutions like the Gujarat Vidyapith with Acharya J. B. Kripalani as its head, the Kashi Vidyapith, the Bengal National University, and the National Muslim University of Aligarh and numerous other schools were started in order to accommodate the non-cooperating students. The Congress Working Committee met frequently to decide important questions on the enforcement of the various parts of the Non-Cooperation programme and to give directives to the Nation.

Leaders travelled wide to preach the cult of non-violence to the people. The government passed orders to restrain the movements of Lajpat Rai, C. R. Das, Babu Rajendra Prasad, and others. C. Rajagopalachari and Yakub Hassan entered the Kerala Province to explain the principle of non-violence. Prohibitory orders were passed on Yakub Hassan, and he, along with three other Kerala leaders, was arrested. This gave momentum to the Non-Cooperation movement in Malabar. The cry of the South against this unjust act of the bureaucrats rose high. There were huge public demonstrations in Madras and elsewhere. Vijiaraghavachariar, Rajagopalachari, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar and other leaders condemned the Government in emphatic

terms. Vijiaraghavachariar, declaring that Non-Cooperation had a bright future before it, severely condemned the action of the Government in arresting the four leaders, and warned the bureaucracy not to trespass on their legitimate rights. India, he said, will soon be led by the people, inflamed within their souls, but yet under sacred restraint, and in a manner consistent with law and order. That was the spirit in which they would work for Swaraj.

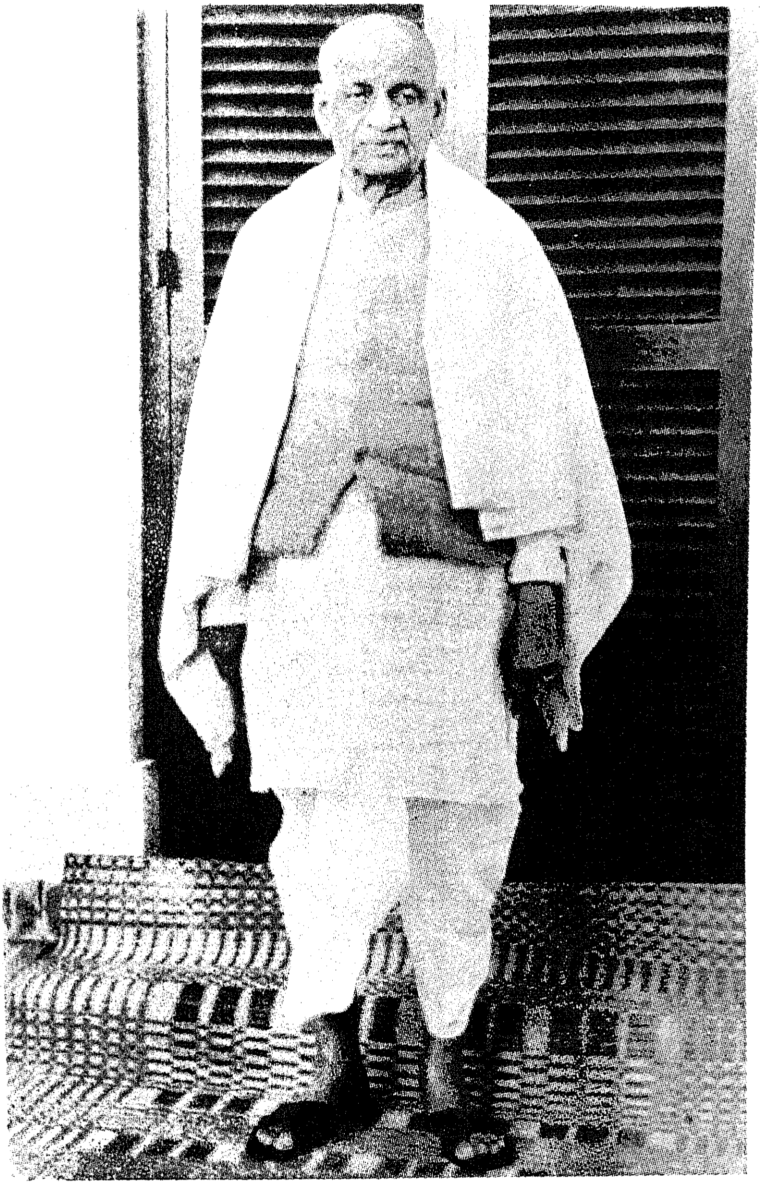
The year 1921 saw many issues tackled. At Bezwada the Committee decided that the time had not yet come to start the no-tax campaign. There it was resolved to collect *one crore* of rupees for the *Swaraj Fund* and to enlist one crore of Congress members. The *Charka* was introduced and twenty lakhs of *Charkas* were to be distributed in the various provinces. The Committee was of opinion that the time was not ripe for launching the Civil Disobedience campaign. At Bombay, it told the non-co-operators not to participate in the civil suits brought against them and advised them only to make a statement before the Court of law to establish their innocence before the public. The All-India Congress Committee which met at Bombay in July 1921, gave the important directive to the people to make a complete boycott of foreign cloth and encourage the Khaddar industry, and further it brought in a regulation that all Congressmen should discard the use of foreign cloth from the first of August next. The Congress declared that no one should participate in functions in connection with the visit of the Prince of Wales.

The *Tilak Swaraj Fund* crossed the one crore mark. The activity of the Congress organisations all over the country rapidly increased. The boycott of the visit of the Prince of Wales was to be effectively carried out and hartal observed voluntarily on the day of his arrival in India.

The Working Committee, at Calcutta, considered important developments like the Moplah revolt, and the Khilaphat questions. The Ali Brothers were arrested in the midst of the Khilaphat agitation. Mahomed Ali's Karachi speech was quoted all over India and its substance was repeated by the Working Committee in a resolution. These events brought a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee at Delhi, which permitted the provincial organisations on their own responsibility to launch civil disobedience including refusal to pay taxes.

The Prince of Wales was due to visit Bengal, the Punjab and the United Provinces by the end of December. Bengal was ready with its boycott plan. This led to the arrest, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, of numerous persons including C. R. Das, Lajpat Rai, Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Congress assembled at Ahmedabad. Deshabandu Das was elected to preside over the Session. As he was in prison, Hakim Ajmal Khan filled his place. The Ahmedabad Session was a notable one where the people were told of their duty as to how they should act in effectively carrying out their non-cooperation programme. This was stated



SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL

in simple and clear terms. The Congress declared that Civil Disobedience was the only civilised and effective substitute for an armed rebellion and advised the people to concentrate attention upon individual or mass civil disobedience as the case might be. It also appealed for the consolidation of Hindu-Muslim unity and the removal of Untouchability. Gandhiji wanted to start the no-tax campaign in Gujarat and the idea had already gained strength in Andhradesa and other places. As the year 1921 drew to its close the feeling was tense. The no-tax campaign of Bardoli, civil disobedience all over the country, the mob outrage at Chauri Chaura, Gandhiji's arrest and conviction for sedition despite his calling off civil disobedience after mob attacks on authority are now history. Repression continued all over the land. The Working Committee appointed a Committee of eminent leaders to tour the country and find out whether Civil Disobedience could be continued. The Committee opined that the country was not prepared then to embark upon general mass civil disobedience and this view was accepted by the Working Committee at Calcutta. The question of Council entry was mooted. Opinion was divided on the utility of such a step. Pandit Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhai Patel, and C. R. Das were in favour against Dr. Ansari and C. Rajagopalachari. Vijiaraghavachariar's view inclined against Council entry. Gaya, the next venue of the Congress, was to decide the issue.

C. R. Das presided over the Gaya Session. Almost all the renowned national leaders were

present. Gandhiji was not among them. He was in jail. But his spirit and ideology pervaded the session. The Congress reaffirmed the Nagpur Resolution on Council-Boycott. It was a fight from the beginning to the end between the pro-changers and the no-changers. Malaviya, Vithalbhai Patel and Hakim Ajmal Khan joined hands with Motilal Nehru, Srinivasa Iyengar and C. R. Das in demanding a change in the Congress policy towards the direction of council-entry. Rajagopalachari, Vijiaraghavachariar, Dr. Ansari, Rajendra Prasad, and Mrs. Sarojini Naidu were against this change.

Rajagopalachari moved the resolution on the taxing question before the Congress which stated that the boycott of Councils carried out during the elections held in 1920 had destroyed the moral strength of the institutions through which Government sought to consolidate its power and carry on its irresponsible rule, and that it was necessary again for the people of India to withhold participation in the elections of the next year, as an essential item in the programme of Non-Violent Non-Cooperation. It further stated that the Congress advised that all voters should abstain from standing as candidates for any of the Councils and from voting for any candidate offering himself as such in disregard of this advice and to signify the abstention in such manner as the All-India Congress Committee might instruct in that behalf. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Dr. Ansari supported Rajagopalachari's proposal. Srinivasa Iyengar and Motilal Nehru were ready with their amendments to the resolution.

Srinivasa Iyengar's amendment asked the Congress to empower Congressmen to contest elections but when they were elected they should absolutely refrain from taking their seats in the Councils. Motilal Nehru's proposal was that the whole question should be decided by the next session of the Congress.

Vijiaraghavachariar, supporting Rajagopalachari's original resolution, appealed to the delegates to decide the question on its merits entirely devoid of all adventitious circumstances. He told them that they could reach their freedom and take their place among the great nations of the world only if they thought and judged for themselves, and did not follow a leader or any number of leaders blindly. According to him, there could not be any progress for our country by accepting either Srinivasa Iyengar's or Motilal Nehru's proposition in favour of a change in the programme regarding Councils. When the bureaucracy would have the power to change the laws and alter laws what could they do? How would they paralyse the Government by vacating their seats in the Councils? Under the Reforms Act X, the Governor-General and every Provincial Governor had power to dissolve their legislative councils as often as they liked. Everytime Congressmen might try to capture the seats in the Councils, but everytime they did so the Councils could be dissolved by the act of the bureaucrats without assigning any reason. To that provision Vijiaraghavachariar had raised his strong protest before Mr. Montague and Lord Chelmsford as it made the law more tyrannical and the

Government more arbitrary. The bureaucracy would tell the world that everytime they gave the people of India a chance to work out the first step in self-government they wrecked it, and the bureaucracy would have an opportunity at the bar of the public opinion of the world to pose as martyrs. 'And their cause and not our cause will be sanctified by the obstruction proposed', said Vijiaraghavachariar. This aspect of the new plan must be thought of.

Congressmen had to go to the electors on the triple issue—to redress the Khilaphat and the Punjab wrongs and to attain Swarajya. The voters would ask how they were going to achieve these aims. 'How are we going to answer?' asked Vijiaraghavachariar. 'The Khilaphat wrong would be remedied by the sword and statesmanship of Turkey, and it was being done so. It would be foolish to ask the Councils to redress the Khilaphat wrongs............The Provincial Government could not do anything as regards the Punjab wrongs. You cannot redress them. Mahatma Gandhi himself in his Report of the Congress Committee (on the Punjab wrongs) recommended forgiveness of the wrong-doers. As regards the past we have no more consolation than in the words of Milton when he heard of the massacre of the Protestants in the Alpine regions—and his consolation was put forth in a divine sonnet opening 'Avenge Oh Lord; thy slaughtered saints'. So I say—'Avenge Oh Lord; thy slaughtered sons of Amritsar'. Why is it we should go to the electorate, call them to give up their labour, come to the polling booth and vote as we

direct them to vote and ourselves spend time and money and energy to get a vote and then after getting a seat do not occupy it? And this may have to be repeated several times'. For these reasons he considered Srinivasa Iyengar's amendment as most futile.

Vijiaraghavachariar contended that the voters had been told in the Calcutta Special Session not to vote at all and the Congress succeeded in keeping a large percentage out of the polling booth. And if they were now asked to vote, it would puzzle them as they were asked to change their course and move exactly in the opposite direction. This was not justified by any change in the circumstances; there was no such change. They were told that the legislative Councils were doing harm. They cannot prevent a few voters from electing a few people and in such great movements things of that kind would exist. When the movement is nourished on the bed-rock of broad morality and general purity, things of that kind should not be taken account of. He appealed to the delegates to reject the proposals of Srinivasa Iyengar and Motilal Nehru as being suicidal and detrimental to the first principle and programme of this movement and it did not matter whether that came altogether within the letter and spirit of the Non-Cooperation movement or not. It was part of their duty in the present mood of suffering and self-sacrifice to face facts with courage. They must face that doom with courage and take the consequences manfully and with hope in God.

Councils were to be boycotted. That was the verdict of the Congress. The Congress historian says: "The reaction against the change of direction of the ship of Non-Cooperation gathered volume and force, and despite the high intellectualism of S. Srinivasa Iyengar and Pandit Motilal Nehru, the ship pursued its old course".[1]

Another important question was subjected to a heated discussion at Gaya. It was Satyamurthi's resolution recommending the boycott of British goods and the appointment of a Committee to go into the details, which ultimately did not emerge successfully. Vijiaraghavachariar opposed the motion. He defended the Nagpur Resolution which recommended the boycott of foreign goods which included the British goods as well and not merely British goods. Further, he expounded the economic side of the question in a scientific and realistic manner. His arguments found favour with the delegates. Rajagopalachari supported Vijiaraghavachariar in a speech full of realism. Though Satyamurthi and A. Rangaswami Iyengar entered into severe criticism of Vijiaraghavachariar and Rajagopalachari, the Congress accepted the view of the latter and reaffirmed the Nagpur Resolution.

The No-Changers succeeded at Gaya. Faith in Gandhian ideology and the programme of Non-Cooperation was reaffirmed. But a few months were enough to see changes. Das resigned his Presidentship; at Bombay the Working Committee decided not

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

to propagate its faith in the boycott of Councils leading to the resignation of confirmed no-changers like Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhai Patel and others. The Congress Working Committee was reconstituted under Dr. Ansari. Meanwhile, Das carried his propaganda for Council entry as leader of the Swarajya party. Within a generation of Surat there was almost a split in the Congress. Vijiaraghavachariar felt that any change should be worked from within the Congress fold so as to preserve the unity of the National body and that no parade of different ideologies, when the goal was the same, should be made.

C. R. Das was touring the South. At Trichinopoly, in a public meeting, he repudiated the statements of Vijiaraghavachariar and justified his party's stand. It was unfortunate that a man of Das's calibre and patriotism should have indulged in personal attacks on Vijiaraghavachariar. Many Congress leaders resented the statement of Das. Vijiaraghavachariar was then in his summer-resort at Kodaikanal. Das's statement was brought to his notice. The old leader did not say anything then. A few days later came out the famous Reply in the form of an open letter to the Bengal Leader in which Vijiaraghavachariar vehemently opposed the stand taken by the Swarajists. The letter spoke for itself. Leaders as well as the press spoke in praise of Vijiaraghavachariar's reply and the gentleness with which he treated Das inspite of the latter's personal attacks on him. Amidst all differences with Das, Vijiaraghavachariar was gentle

with him. A leading journalist wrote: 'To some Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar would never bend, and Pandit Motilal Nehru was one such. To others, as to Deshabandhu Das, he was very gentle in the midst of all differences. But from all, he extracted the utmost worth by his contact, and for sixty years, without any one suspecting it, his gallant interventions have kept administrators and politicians on good behaviour on many a critical occasion'.[1]

(1) Taken from an article by Khasa Subba Rao.

VIII
THE HISTORIC MARCH

'Council-entry' remained an unsettled issue. The Swarajists persisted in their demand. A Special Session of the Congress was convened at Delhi in September 1923 under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. A permissive resolution stated 'such Congressmen as have no religious or conscientious objections against entering the legislatures are at liberty to stand as candidates and to exercise their right of voting at the forthcoming elections. And this Congress, therefore, suspends all propaganda against entering the Councils'. It further advised the people to concentrate on the programme of constructive work with redoubled vigour. Gandhiji was in jail. He was not in favour of 'Council-entry' as it was inconsistent with Non-Cooperation. Some leaders held the opinion that Congressmen would be divided in their outlook on the programme and hence they did not support the idea of a special session.

At Cocanada the ordinary session of the Congress was held under Maulana Mahomed Ali. The President endeavoured hard to maintain harmony in the Congress ranks. Council-entry once again figured prominently in the deliberations. Strong opposition to it was recorded. But C. Rajagopalachari, a pronounced no-changer, lent his support to the Delhi permissive resolution and so too Vallabhai Patel. The Congress re-affirmed the Non-Cooperation resolutions

adopted at Calcutta, Nagpur, Ahmedabad, Gaya and Delhi. It stated: 'Since doubts have been raised by reason of the non-cooperation resolution adopted at Delhi with regard to Council-entry, whether there has been any change in the policy of the Congress, this Congress affirms that the principle and policy of that boycott remain unaltered'.[1] It appealed to the Nation to carry out the constructive programme as adopted at Bardoli and prepare for the adoption of civil disobedience.

In Vijiaraghavachariar's view, the Cocanada Session was a dismal failure as a purely political process. The 'compromise' was passed amidst the tears and even curses of the genuine Satyagrahis and the staunch followers of Mahatma Gandhi. The Delhi permissive resolution completely suspended the Gaya resolution relating to the boycott of the Councils which was the pivot of the Gandhian tactic. To call this a 'non-cooperation', declared Vijiaraghavachariar, was not only inaccurate but was so unfair as to be dishonest. He asserted that Gandhism had come to stay and the sanction behind our national demand lay in the full Gandhian doctrine of non-cooperation.

The year 1924 brought the release of Gandhiji. There were prolonged discussions between him, Das and Motilal Nehru at Juhu. Gandhiji could not see eye to eye with them. He issued a statement noting his fundamental differences with the Swarajist leaders

(1) Taken from the report of the proceedings of the Cocanada Congress.

on the question of Council-entry, which, in his opinion, was inconsistent with non-cooperation as he conceived it. He said that the difference between them was neither one of detail nor a mere matter of interpretation of the word Non-Cooperation but related to the essential mental attitude resulting in different treatment of vital problems. Yet Gandhiji appealed by saying: 'The purpose of the Delhi and Cocanada resolutions was to allow the Swarajists a chance of trying the method of Council-entry and that purpose can be served only if the 'no-changers' with scrupulous honesty, allow the Swarajists full liberty to pursue their programme in the Councils, unfettered by any obstruction from them'. Gandhiji had given the command. The no-changers observed neutrality, the Swarajists declaring that Council-entry was consistent with Non-Cooperation won the elections for Councils.

The annual Congress met at Belgaum. Gandhiji was the President. 'In the history of non-cooperation, Belgaum is a landmark. The revolt against Gandhism was almost complete. The Congress stood at the parting of ways. Should Congressmen hereafter be in rival camps or cover up their differences by an agreement, and if the latter, who better than Gandhi, who other than Gandhi could achieve this formidable task of pacifying the no-changers while withdrawing civil-disobedience, and assuaging the feelings of Swarajists while resisting Council-entry? If great programmes can be initiated only by great men, they can also be suspended by such

great men and none others. It was, therefore, in the fitness of times, though not in the fitness of things, that Gandhi should preside over the Belgaum Congress of 1924'.[1]

Gandhiji, in his Presidential Address, gave a lucid exposition of the principle of non-violence and made an earnest plea for the boycott of violence. Regarding Indian Independence, he declared: 'I would strive for Swaraj within the Empire, but would not hesitate to sever all connection, if severence became a necessity through Britain's own fault'. He also dealt with the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, Untouchability, Spinning, and Cottage industries.

The important event of 1925 was the Cawnpore Congress presided over for the first time by an Indian woman, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. The Congress re-affirmed its faith in Civil Disobedience and approved the important part of the Patna Resolution of the Working Committee which directed the Congress to take up political work.

The Gauhati Congress of 1926 was presided over by S. Srinivasa Ayyangar, a man of independence and courage, who was greatly responsible for the success of the Congress at the election in Madras in 1926. An Advocate-General of Madras, he resigned his post and joined the Congress. The Gauhati Congress gave the directive to all Congressmen to

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

refuse to accept Ministerships or other Government offices and oppose the formation of Ministries until the National Demand was satisfactorily responded to by the Government. Further it told the Congressmen to refuse supplies and throw out budgets until their demand was met with.

There was stalemate in 1927. The Royal Commission's visit to this country was in the air. The Congress assembled in Madras under Dr. M. A. Ansari. Vijiaraghavachariar attended the session. At this session, the Congress declared the goal of the Indian people to be Complete National Independence. Secondly, the Congress called upon the nation to effectively and successfully carry out the boycott of the Royal Commission headed by Sir Jhon Simon, which was to visit India to inquire into the working of the system of Government under 'the Montford Reforms' and to find out to what extent Responsible Government can be established and to consider other matters. Lastly, several Draft Constitutions for India were presented at the Congress and it gave power to the Working Committee to consult other bodies and place a Constitution so drafted by it before a Special Convention to get it approved. Vijiaraghavachariar was one of the very earliest among the Indian Statesmen who drafted a Swaraj Constitution for India, as an answer to Lord Birkenhead's challenge to Indians to draft their Constitution. He presented his Swaraj Constitution at the Madras Session and followed it up with a brilliant speech.

The Draft which Vijiaraghavachariar proposed consisted of two parts, the first part relating to the type of mechanism of the Swarajya Government, and the second part to the several provisions constituting the structure. The salient features of the Constitution which he proposed were the inclusion of a Declaration of Rights, the clear definition of the Composition, functions and powers of the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary, and the questions relating to Appropriation and Audit, the Public Services and Local Government. He advocated a Unitary type of Constitution for the Commonwealth of India and strongly opposed the federal idea. Quoting Mazzini who declared 'Federalism would cancel the great mission of Italy in the world', he made a fervant plea for the adoption of a unitary constitution for our county which was in consonance with the history and tradition of India and her civilization. After analysing the constitutions of the U. S. A., Great Britain, Australia and other countries, he considered that the application of the federal type to India would be an extremely novel and dangerous experiment. "Let us see", he declared, "that federalism does not cancel the great mission of our fatherland in this world. We can also, like the great Mazzini, exclaim 'never rise in any other name than that of India and of All India'. Let us beware too that that constitution is the best for a people which implies no breach with its past and I have already invited your attention to the fact that our past has along been a Unitary system of Government. The United States of America had no past".

The Madras Session ended. The Simon Commission landed in India early in 1928. The Congress had already prepared the country to be ready with the boycott plan. On the day of its landing, *hartal* was observed all over India. Throughout the length and breadth of the country, the Commission met with hostile demonstrations. The cry of 'Go back, Simon' was resounding everywhere. Vijiaraghavachariar was in the van of opposition to the Simon Commission. He with others advocated its boycott and their appeal met with splendid response from the people. S. Srinivasa Iyengar organised the boycott movement in a remarkable manner and led the campaign in Madras.

The All Parties Conference was the important event of the year 1928. Early in the year the Conference assembled in Delhi, and later in Bombay where a committee was appointed with Pandit Motilal Nehru as Chairman to consider and determine the principles of the Constitution for India. Eminent men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Ali Imam, M. S. Aney, M. R. Jayakar, Subhas Chandra Bose were on the Committee. The Nehru Committee, as it was popularly styled, published a Report outlining in detail a Constitution for India. The Conference met at Lucknow once again to consider the Nehru Report. When the Conference concluded its session, some members of the Committee, who were present, met and in consultation with the Congress Working Committee selected Mrs. Besant, Dr. Ansari, Vijiaraghavachariar, Pandit Malaviya, Lajpat Rai,

Abul Kalam Azad, M. A. Jinnah and Moulana Abdul Kadir Kasuri as representatives of the Congress and they were co-opted as members of the Committee.

The Nehru Report was the off-spring of the efforts of the greatest leaders of India. The Nehru Committee made the declaration that Dominion Status be the goal of India. Though there arose a difference of opinion between those in favour of Dominion Status and those who stood for Complete Independence, a split was avoided. Pandit Motilal Nehru earnestly appealed for the acceptance of the Committee's Report. Vijiaraghavachariar took an active part in the work of the Committee and made a bold plea for the sinking of all communal and sectional differences and for the building up of a strong and united India as an equal partner of the Commonwealth. The Nehru Committee before making its recommendations freely drew on the constitutions of the Dominions as well as Mrs. Besant's Commonwealth of India Bill and the Drafts prepared by Vijiaraghavachariar, S. Srinivasa Iyengar and A. Rangaswami Iyengar, and also the Committee of the Independent Labour Party and the Government of India Act. The Committee made an unequivocal declaration on the question of the Fundamental Rights and clearly dealt with the questions relating to the Executive, Legislature and Judiciary, central as well as provincial, and India's relationship with the Parliament. The Committee agreed to the redistribution of the Provinces on a linguistic basis on the demand of the majority of the population of

the area concerned, subject to financial and administrative considerations.

On the matter of Communal representation, the Committee was in favour of joint or mixed electorates throughout India for the House of Representatives and the Provincial legislatures. It stated that there should be no reservation of seats in the House of Representatives except for Muslims in the Provinces where they are in a minority, and non-muslims in the North West Frontier Province and that according to the strict proportion to the population. Further, the Muslims or Non-Muslims, where reservation was allowed to them, had the right to contest additional seats. The Committee declared that no seats would be reserved for any community in Bengal or the Punjab. The reservation of seats would be for a period of ten years. Sind should be separated from Bombay into a separate Province after such enquiry as to her fiscal position as may be considered necessary. The Karnataka Province should be constituted and all the newly formed Provinces should have the same form of Governments. These were the recommendations of the Nehru Committee to solve the communal problem. Also, the Nehru Report suggested the appointment of a Committee by the Governor-General-in-Council to advise the Government on the matter of Defence.

The virtual unanimity with which the recommendations were formulated by the Nehru Committee was due to the earnest efforts of its Chairman, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. Ansari, Vijiaraghavachariar,

Malaviya and others. The Committee achieved its task of framing a Constitution for India.

Calcutta was the venue of the annual Congress. Pandit Motilal Nehru was its President. The Congress welcoming the Nehru Report as a great step in political advance declared that it would resort to Non-Violent Non-Cooperation if the British Parliament did not accept in its entirety the constitution so proposed. It stated that free propaganda for Complete Independence could be carried on and laid down the future programme of the Congress in and outside the Legislatures. It was the sad duty of the Calcutta Session to record the deaths of two of the nation's eminent leaders—Lala Lajpat Rai and Hakim Ajmal Khan. Lajpat Rai, the lion of the Punjab, passed away. He was Vijiaraghavachariar's intimate friend and colleague. It took months for him to recover from the shock of Lajpat Rai's death. The sorrow deepened in him as he lost another friend and colleague, Hakim Ajmal Khan, who was known for his integrity and large-heartedness. Lajpat Rai's courage stood alone by itself. He has left an imperishable mark on the Indian soil, a mark denoting suffering and sacrifice, which will remain immortal. In spite of the fact that the largest measure of agreement was arrived at at the All Parties Conference, it was a failure. Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose disliked the idea of Dominion Status as enunciated by the Conference and they advocated complete Independence.

The Delhi Assembly Bomb case in which Bhagat Singh was involved, the election of Gandhiji

for the Presidentship of the Congress and his subsequent resignation, and of Jawaharlal's ascendency to the Presidential throne were events of importance in the year 1929. The father handed over charge to the son; Motilal Nehru, the outgoing President, stepped down, and Jawaharlal Nehru, the President-elect, ascended the Gadi at Lahore.

Jawaharlal Nehru's presidential address was remarkable in every way. He dealt with various subjects—Non-Violence, the boycott of legislatures, the communal issue, the international problem, India's glorious heritage. He was uncompromising on the question of Complete Independence for India. The Lahore Session was one of the most important of the gatherings ever assembled. The Congress made an unequivocal declaration that the word 'Swaraj' meant Complete Independence. The creed thus found a new interpretation and was approved of by the Nation. The duty of every Congressman was to work for Complete Independence for India.

The British Government had declared their intentions to hold a Round Table Conference between the British Representatives and the representatives of the Indian States and British India. Gandhiji asked for an assurance from the Viceroy Lord Irwin, that the Conference would proceed on the basis of Dominion Status. Lord Irwin could not give an undertaking to that effect. Gandhiji was dissatisfied.

The idea of a Round Table Conference did not find favour with many leading men. Vijiaraghavachariar

thought that it would serve no useful purpose and was not enamoured of the idea. In fact, he was against the participation of the Congress in the Conference. Many eminent statesmen agreed with him. But there were others who were carried away by the new proposal. The Lahore Congress said that nothing would be gained under the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the Round Table Conference.

The next year overflowed with activity. The Congress gave a call to the Nation to observe the 26th January as Independence Day. Arrests were made in large numbers all over the Country. At Sabarmati, the Congress Working Committee met and authorised Gandhiji and those who believed in Non-Voilence as an article of faith, to start Civil Disobedience as and when they desired, for the purpose of achieving *Purna Swaraj*. Gandhiji's Salt Satyagraha compaign commenced. He made no secret of his plans. He wrote a long letter to Lord Irwin, the Viceroy. The plan through Civil Disobedience, he said, would be to combat the evils of British rule in India. If the evils were not remedied, he would disregard the provisions of the Salt Laws. He considered the Salt Tax to be the most iniquitous of all from a poor man's standpoint.

The Government did not yield. Gandhiji sent another letter to the Viceroy expressing his deep regret at the Government's attitude. He wrote: 'On bended knees I asked you for bread and received a stone instead. The English Nation responds only

to force, and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. The only public peace the Nation knows is the peace of the public prison. India is a vast prison house. I repudiate this (British) Law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotomy of compulsory peace that is shaking the heart of the Nation for want of free vent'.

Gandhiji decided to prepare salt on the sea-shore and thus break the Salt Laws. He *marched to Dandi*, a village on the sea-side, with seventy-nine of his followers. As Gandhiji advanced, there was a surge of feeling in the hearts of millions. Day after day he marched and day after day the feelings of the masses were roused. Popular awakening was all over the country, and resulted in the creation of a feeling in the hearts of the millions that they had to end the evils of British rule which, as Gandhiji said, had brought about the moral, material, cultural and spiritual ruination of this country. And the people rose with Gandhiji to fight their non-violent battle with the British.

Gandhiji walked for twenty-four days. He reached Dandi. Earlier, Vallabhai, who had gone in advance, was arrested and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. The time for action had come. The whole country was ready to start Salt Satyagraha from the 6th April. And Gandhiji wrote to the Viceroy explaining his intention to take possession of the Salt Works at Dharsana, if the Government did not accede to his rightful demand by removing the Salt Tax. The Government laid their hands on

Gandhiji. He was arrested and taken to Yerawada prison.

Abbas Tyabji led the Salt Satyagraha campaign after Gandhiji's arrest. When a few days later he too was arrested, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu took upon herself the direction of the movement. In the South, C. Rajagopalachari led the campaign at Vedaranyam. Arrests were made, repression continued, but the mass movement continued and with it the growing nationalism of the people.

The Round Table Conference met in London in November 1930. A number of Committees were set up to deal with different matters. The plenary session was to be held on the 19th January, 1931. Vijiaraghavachariar sent cablegrams to London to the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India, *the Spectator*, Lord Shankey and K. T. Paul in which he invited their attention to the anarchy developing less from civil disobedience than from phenomenal use of ordinances and police force and pleaded for the grant of immediate Dominion Status for India.

The year 1931 opened. Gandhiji was released and along with him the leaders of the Congress. But the nation's sigh of relief at the release of the leaders was followed by grief at a sad event. Pandit Motilal Nehru passed away in Allahabad and in him India lost a towering personality.

Gandhiji proceeded to Delhi to meet Lord Irwin and discussed with him various matters

including the excess committed by the police, and the Salt Satyagraha. Long and continued discussions between the Viceroy and Gandhiji resulted in the famous Gandhi-Irwin Agreement. The civil disobedience movement was to be discontinued; the Satyagraha prisoners were to be released; picketing was to be peaceful but it could not be discriminatory of the British goods only; the lands that were confiscated or sold were to be restored; for the sake of giving relief to the poor the Government was prepared to extend their administrative provisions to other villages where salt could be collected or made but they were unable to condone breaches of the Salt Law;—these were some of the important terms of the Agreement. Further, Gandhiji agreed to consider the constitutional question in the light of the Prime Minister's statement at the Round Table Conference. The Prime Minister, Ramsey MacDonald, stated clearly that the Indian constitutional structure would be Federal, that the legislature would be represented by the Provinces and the States, that subjects like Defence and External Affairs would be reserved, that the Governor-General would have special powers to discharge his duties to preserve peace and tranquility in India, to safeguard the position of the minorities, to ensure the financial credit of India, and to discharge his other special responsibilities.

The Gandhi-Irwin settlement did not find complete favour with the Congress. Leaders were not altogether satisfied. Vijiaraghavachariar welcomed the Agreement in general, and paid tributes to the

high statesmanship and fairness of Gandhiji and Lord Irwin. The Karachi Congress approved of the provisional settlement between the Working Committee and the Government of India, namely, the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement, and appointed Mahatma Gandhi as its representative at the Round Table Conference.

Vijiaraghavachariar's view was that nothing fruitful for nationalist India would come out of the Round Table Conference and he thought it would not be desirable for the Congress to participate in it. He was convinced that no advance would be made by the Conference considering the circumstances and that communalism would once again impede its work. He made a bold appeal to Gandhiji before he set sail for London not to take part in the Conference. Gandhiji felt that the hope of success was far away. Yet, he went. The part played by him at the second Round Table Conference needs no recounting. His speeches at the Conference and at the Minorities' Committee revealed his deep passion for India's freedom and his sense of fairness and justice. The proceedings went on. Gandhiji was not hopeful of an honourable settlement. The Conference concluded rather suddenly on the 1st December 1931.

Gandhiji returned to India only to find repression everywhere. He felt that the Government had not acted in accordance with the terms of the Delhi settlement. He told the Viceroy, Lord Wellingdon, who had succeeded Lord Irwin, that the

Congress would resort to civil disobedience if the Government made no satisfactory response to the rightful demands of the people. Further, he reminded the Viceroy that according to the Delhi Pact civil disobedience was not given up but only discontinued. The bureaucracy would not hear, and if they heard, they heard only to make heavy preparations to crush the national elements. Civil disobedience was to be of a purely non-violent character. That was Gandhiji's directive. And the Government laid their hands on the leaders. They were imprisoned.

What was the outcome of the Round Table Conference? The Government announced its proposals in a White Paper which struck a severe blow at the root of Indian Unity, and in particular the unity of Hindus. The White Paper proposed the creation of separate electorates for the 'Untouchables' and they were to be politically segregated from the Hindu community. The country was enraged at this proposal and Gandhiji swore his opposition to it with his life. Eminent leaders like Vijiaraghavachariar, Pandit Malaviya, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Sardar Vallabhai Patel vehemently opposed the new move on the part of the British Government. Gandhiji told the British Prime Minister that he would fast unto death if the proposal to dismember the Hindu community was not withdrawn. Gandhiji was in Yerawada jail and his *epic fast* was to begin on the 20th September, 1932.

Gandhiji commenced his fast. The nation was in great ferment. Gandhiji's life should be saved

at all costs and the cause of right upheld. Pandit Malaviya convened a Conference of leaders which included among others Rajagopalachari, Sardar Patel, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Jayakar, Rajendra Prasad, M. C. Rajah and Dr. Ambedkar. The leaders brought forth a formula acceptable to all. That was on the fifth day of Gandhiji's fast. Rajagopalachari strained every nerve of his to evolve the formula. He succeeded. The agreement thus reached has ever been known as the *Poona Pact.* Gandhiji accepted the formula in generous words. The British Cabinet too accepted the Poona Agreement. Gandhiji broke his fast on the 26th September. The nation succeeded in saving the life of Gandhiji and succeeded in upholding the righteous cause. India would gratefully remember the efforts of Rajagopalachari in this connection and the resolve with which he worked to succeed and save the life of Gandhiji.

The Poona Agreement stated that the depressed classes or untouchables would discard separate electorates and remain within the framework of general Hindu electorates. In the legislatures they would have a number of seats, out of those allotted to the general constituencies by the British Award, reserved for them and they would adopt the method of double election to choose their representatives to the legislatures. They could elect four representatives to each reserved seat by the primary election, and one of the four would be chosen to the legislature by the general electorate. The agreement was a pledge of the intentions of the Caste-Hindus to the welfare of the

depressed classes. The whole agreement would continue until altered by common consent and the primary elections of the depressed classes would last for a period of ten years which was the maximum limit. By this Poona Agreement a great crisis was averted.

IX

HINDU MAHASABHA

Besides the Congress, the All-India Hindu Mahasabha and All-India Muslim League were the two influential organizations functioning in our country. The strong-hold of the Hindu Mahasabha was the Maharashtra, the Punjab and Bengal. Thirty-five years and more have passed since the Mahasabha was founded. Pandit Malaviya, Bhai Paramanand, Swami Shradhananda, Dr. Moonje, Lajpat Rai and Vijiaraghavachariar were the originators of the move to build up the Hindu Mahasabha. With the support of such leading personalities, the Mahasabha was growing strong. Eminent men like N. C. Kelkar, B. G. Khaparde, Raja Narendranath, L. R. Bhopatkar, V. D. Savarkar and Dr. Syama Prasad Mukerjee took up its cause with earnestness and it began to exercise influence over the country. Its object was to consolidate the Hindus, reform the Hindu society and remove its evils.

Like the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha organised itself on an All-India basis and held annual sessions regularly. Pandit Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and Vijiaraghavachariar—all ex-Presidents of the Congress—have been its Presidents. It fell on Vijiaraghavachariar to preside over the thirteenth session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha at Akola in 1931. Some spoke of the inconsistency involved in his participation in the activities of the Hindu

Mahasabha. Those who have read his Presidential Address in 1931 well realize how he reconciled his loyalty to the Congress and that to the Mahasabha at the same time. Identifying Hindu interests with national interests fully, he gave a lead which influenced the outlook of the Mahasabha on the issue of nationalism. He told the public that the constitution and functions of the Hindu Mahasabha were not confined to Hindus in a narrow sense. The Mahasabha included all the people of India excepting the Muslims and Christians, the only condition being that the religions professed by them should be of Indian origin. The Mahasabha reflected the view of not only Hindus, commonly so designated, but also of the Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Arya-Samajists and Brahmos. The Mahasabha aimed at bringing harmonious relations between the Hindus on the one hand, and Muslims, Christians and other small communities such as the Parsees, Jews, Anglo-Indians and Europeans on the other. There was supreme need, he said, to keep our national ideals to the fore, ideals which were not meant to serve one community as against the others but which would reconcile the interests of all communities with those of a strongly welded nation.

In his Presidential Address at Akola, Vijiaraghavachariar dealt with the three vital questions that affected the country and its constitutional structure, namely, the problem of minorities, especially the Hindu-Muslim problem, the proposed Federal Constitution linking the Indian States with British

India so as to create a consolidated Greater India, and certain reservations and safeguards alluded to in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact as essential. He suggested that the Government of the Indian Dominion should place the Hindu-Muslim problem, whether or not we reached an agreement, within the jurisdiction of the League of Nations which would readily enquire into and settle the issue impartially. He characterised the Gandhi–Irwin Pact as the result of the brilliantly planned and patriotically executed move of Mahatma Gandhi and said that it was a truce and was not meant to offer a solution constructively of the highly complex political situation of the country. Its great value lay in that it represented and expressed the mutual spirit of accommodation and goodwill. Vijiaraghava-chariar played a notable part in the deliberations of the Cawnpur Session of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1935. The Government of India Bill was occupying the attention of the leading public men of India. The Bill was subjected to sharp criticisms from different quarters and Congressmen, in particular, were bitter against it. Vijiaraghavachariar, while moving a resolution on the Constitution at the Cawnpur Session, condemned the Government of India Bill as wholly unsuitable and reactionary and called upon the British Parliament to retire altogether, leaving the Crown exclusively to deal with the problem. He took the case of Japan where the Mikado got rid of the Shogun and granted, rather established, Parliamentary Government with the double chamber for the mere asking, without any revolution, without any non-cooperation. His resolution proposed to open

the way for such conditions in India, namely, the Emperor would get rid of the Shoguns who formed the Parliament for India and after getting rid of the corporate Shogun and Shogunates would begin to rule India instead of merely reigning; he would give India a Constitution of the latest kind with adult franchise, with no federation of the States and with provinces divided not on the ground of federation but on linguistic and geographical convenience. That being the result, India should at no distant date be exactly as Japan was then. Japan was a mighty power in the world; within seventy years it had become a mighty power. Similarly the Sovereign as Emperor of India could easily give effect to the wishes of the people, particularly in view of another vital fact namely, the *Proclamation of 1858* by Queen Victoria which he called the *Magna Carta of India*. When the Mutiny was over, Queen Victoria, who was then in Hanover, in her Proclamation declared that not the Cabinet but a female Sovereign was going to speak to the people of India and that henceforth her Indian subjects would be placed on a footing of equality with her other subjects. She solemnly promised and told the Indian people that her obligations to them henceforth would be the same as her obligations to her other subjects. That did Vijiaraghavachariar justly call a *Magna Carta*. Though the Proclamation was later on confirmed by her son, King Edward, and by the present Sovereign, it had remained a dead letter all these seventy-five years and more. If they called upon the present Emperor of India to be as good as his August Grandmother and

to take them exactly where they should be, he said: 'We shall soon be a Japan, a larger Japan and let me add, a Japan without a Korea to conquer, without a Manchuria to dominate and without a China to exploit'.[1] He concluded: "If His Majesty the Emperor of India declared that British India would henceforth be a Dominion in the Commonwealth and bestowed on it a Constitution on the lines of the Report of the All-Parties Conference or the Constitution of Weimar, then that day will be remembered and celebrated for ever as epoch-making. Then, and only then, the present growing and widespread national discontent would disappear and the ancient loyalty to the Crown could restart with fresh vigour and fragrance and unalloyed good-will to the people of England, to the eternal and unprecedented advantage of India and England. Then the people of British India would have started on their path towards the unique goal of all mankind, taking their proper place among the great nations of World and contributing their best towards the peace and glory of the Commonwealth and as an original member of the League of Nations towards World's peace".[2] He made a striking speech on the resolution and it was unanimously adopted.

The stand taken by the Hindu Mahasabha was on democratic lines though it was not in keeping

(1) From the speech delivered by Vijiaraghavachariar at the Cawnpur Session of the Mahasabha.

(2) Ibid

with the march of events and the changing circumstances. The Mahasabha guaranteed the rights of every citizen in the State, proposed the Parliamentary type of Government as best suited for India, advised that the joint-electorate system should be adopted, suggested that proportional representation be followed in the reservation of seats for the various communities in the Legislatures, insisted that appointments to all posts in the Executive, Judiciary and Services be made on the ground of 'merit', assured everyone a vote, and advocated adult franchise for the whole of India—items in strict accordance with the principles of democracy. Vijiaraghavachariar favoured the adoption of these principles with regard to India.

In his view, the political outlook of every organization should be free from communal bias. Its prime aim must be devoted to the cause of the nation. The Hindu Mahasabha had no differences with the Congress in its political objective but the former had a great part to play in the social and cultural fields, especially in removing the evils of Hindu society and in achieving the most vital need of India, namely, Hindu-Muslim Unity. If the Mahasabha should succeed in its endeavours by realising these cardinal objectives, and assist the progressive growth of true national spirit, then it would justify its existence and the tree would grow well from the seed sown by its patriarchs and yield the fruit—the fruit to be shared by one and all inhabiting this ancient land.

X

THE UNITY CONFERENCE

The second Round Table Conference ended and there was communal bitterness in India. The communal problem bristled with difficulties. Repeated attempts were made to solve it but without success. The minority communities, especially Muslims, made extravagant demands and they were unacceptable to the Hindus. It was more than ever realised that unity among the various communities and parties was essential to secure the freedom of India. An epoch-making Conference was held in Allahabad in November 1932 in which the various communities and parties took part. Ever since it is known as the great Unity Conference.

It was the desire of every one, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian or other, that Vijiaraghavachariar, the eighty year old veteran statesman from South India, should preside over the Unity Conference and he was unanimously elected to the Chair. The Conference met in the Mayo Hall in Allahabad on the 3rd November, 1932, and appointed a Committee, which was asked to discuss the communal problem and to arrive at agreed recommendations for its settlement. The Unity Committee, as it was popularly known, consisted of eminent public men numbering fifty, including Vijiaraghavachariar, Pandit Malaviya, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Moulana Shaukat Ali, C. Rajagopalachari, Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant,

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, C. Y. Chintamani, Asaf Ali, M. S. Aney, Giani Kartar Singh, Dr. B. S. Moonje, Ramananda Chatterji, Dr. F. X. De'Souza, Dr. Syed Mahmud and others.

Vijiaraghavachariar's brilliant opening speech had its own effect on the success of the Conference. He said that they had met there to consider the situation created as a result of the Premier's Award and the Poona Pact which was the result of a glorious martyrdom. They were there to see what compromise they could arrive at to make the conditions created by the communal award less unsatisfactory. The Award had done justice to none. The communities were called upon to put their heads together to see that the injustice was corrected. They were called upon not to think of the constitution. They were not there to discuss Dominion Status for India, although he felt that the kind of Dominion Status that was coming was at any rate such that the Congress would not accept it.

The Award, he said, could not be set aside entirely, but it depended upon them to make it less unsatisfactory. That required sacrifice and they were called upon to offer it. They were called upon to settle the issue on the principle of 'give and take'. They must achieve this end. If they failed, the result would be disastrous. Those that were called upon to sacrifice would have no reason to entertain any fears if they remembered that the arrangements now made would automatically cease after a period of ten years.

It seemed to him that it was just as well that Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs concentrated on the idea of a Joint-electorate if they wished to take their place in the family of nations. 'If we wish to be a nation, integration of the communities must take place. Joint-electorates are but the beginning of such integration. A separate electorate is opposed to this. I prayerfully hope, at the same time, that Muslims will distinguish between the essential and non-essential portions of their demands'.[1] Denying the possibility of a communal majority under the Award, he said that if Responsible Government was established, the majority community could have to go a begging for alliances. Cabinet Government would mean a group government. In these circumstances, it seemed to him that the matter was worth thinking over. There had been a good deal of misconception about the nature of the future government. He would like to say in that connection a word to his Hindu brethren. No constitution could work without conventions, nor could a paper constitution work. Because in a certain province Muslims would be in a majority, it did not follow that it would mean Muslim rule, any more than Hindu rule where there was a Hindu majority. He asserted: 'You cannot have a Cabinet of Hindus alone, or Muslims alone. They must command a majority'. Concluding, he said that he would also bring to their notice the resolution passed by the women of Bombay in which they had said that this Conference would make or mar the future

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's Speech

of India, in which he entirely agreed, and made a fervent appeal to build up a strong and united India.

The Unity Committee had to face an uphill task of satisfactorily meeting the numerous demands made by the sections of opinion. The problems of the Punjab, Bengal and Sind, the system of electorates and the question of representation figured prominently in the deliberations. The Committee sat for nearly fifteen days with the resolve to settle these taxing questions and it made a report of the agreements reached. Reviewing the proceedings, Vijiaraghavachariar said: 'Nation-making commenced at this Conference. I was glad I was among the friends gathered here. Indeed, this fortnight has been the brightest and happiest in my life'. That which greatly impressed him as the most important result of the Conference was the final acceptance of the principle of joint-electorates. Though there were reservations or conditions, he felt that they would disappear by and by.

The Unity Conference succeeded in its endeavour by arriving at *an Agreement*. The Conference was emphatically of opinion that a Government at the Centre fully responsible to the people and possessing the full rights of a National Government would alone satisfy the needs of India and ensure the welfare of the people. It, therefore, demanded that control over the Government of India should be transferred to the Indian people with only such safeguards, for a short period fixed by the statute, as may

be shown to be demonstrably necessary in the interests of India.

When the Conference met again in December and considered the Report of the Committee, Vijia-raghavachariar appealed to the delegates and the country to abide by and give effect to the Agreement that was reached and uphold the cause of unity. He said: "The problem is highly complex and unexampled in world history. The problem before us is—to be or not to be. This movement has been started along with a parallel movement relating to the uplift of the Depressed Classes with a view to save us from ourselves and save us from external danger. Considering the movement for unity in its true aspect, we are where we are, and we are not where we ought to be, chiefly because we have been divided into sections by class, creed and other interests. This has been really a stumbling block and this fact has been made much of, and is being made use of, for the purpose of preventing us from getting back our inalienable rights. Henceforth, our duty is to integrate ourselves into one great nation. Let us not forget that 'nations by themselves are made'. We have two movements before us. The object of both is one and the same, viz., justice, humanity, and statesmanship. These two movements are similar in every way, but whilst one is vertical, the other is horizontal. The first was started by Gandhiji, namely, reform and uplift of the Depressed Class Hindus. The other wass tarted by Pandit Malaviya, of unity of all the Communities in India. The proposed adjustment,

based on a union of hearts, was necessarily transient and their creative experience during the period would tell them what things were necessary and what not, for, we shall then be in far better position to demand 'that Constitution, which is ours, given by God, from which we have so long been excluded. For this purpose, this movement towards national unity should expand in every direction and flow on as it expands and increases in volume. It is only when we reach an unbreakable national solidarity that we can put forth our claims to get into the great international family of nations of the world and secure our legitimate place therein, not only to our own advantage, but to the light and guide of man in his march towards destiny".[1]

Though the British Government, by making the announcement of unconditional separation of Sind and allotment of 33⅓ representation to Muslims in the Central Legislature, frustrated the efforts of the leaders of the Allahabad Unity Conference, the Conference achieved concrete results. It wrote a new chapter in the political history of our country.

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's Speech

XI
GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Congress historian concludes his narrative with this beautiful passage: "In one word, let us evolve from the age-long social structure, for the benefit of those who suffer and those who are ignorant, more light to our homes and more comfort to their inmates. The Congress has recognised this to be the first of all natural obligations, yet the first of all political necessities, and therefore guarantees unto all, these inalienable estates which every young man inherits in life, namely, the labour which makes him free and the thought which makes him noble.

"Thus has the stream of the Congress that had its humble origin in Bombay in 1885, flowed on for half a century,—now as a narrow channel and now as a wide river, here cutting across wood and forest and there eroding hill and dale, at one place, pooling its freshes into a bed of serene and even stagnant waters, and at another, presenting a mighty and roaring torrent,—all the while swelling its volume and enriching its content by an increasing flood of annual downpour of new ideas and new ideals, waiting with pious faith to realise its destiny by the final absorption of its national culture, integrated and purified, into the wider and vaster culture of internationalism or cosmo-nationality".[1]

(1) History of the Congress by Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

The year 1935 drew to a close. The Indian National Congress completed its fiftieth year, living in all glory by rendering service to the people irrespective of creed or caste. The attainment of Swaraj or Complete Independence for India was its goal. 'Swaraj is our birth-right', declared Lokamanya Tilak. Vijiaraghavachariar demanded at Nagpur that Swaraj should be the motive for Non-Cooperation to which Gandhiji readily agreed. The Congress pledged itself to attain Swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means. The struggle began with the weapon of non-violent non-cooperation and the Congress fought many a battle to reach its goal. Fifty years rolled on not without events of great significance. The Congress assembled in Bombay, its birth place, to celebrate its Golden Jubilee. Dr. Rajendra Prasad presided over the momentous session in our national history.

Leading public men of South India joined in Madras to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Vijiaraghavachariar's entry into public life. It was remarkable that *his* Golden Jubilee should have been celebrated along with the Golden Jubilee of the Indian National Congress. In spite of his failing health, Vijiaraghavachariar went to Madras to accept the honour done to him by his countrymen. On the 27th December, the Victoria Public Hall in Madras was packed to capacity. Leaders belonging to all shades of opinion assembled to honour one of India's greatest sons by taking part in *his* Golden Jubilee celebrations. Quite fittingly the meeting was presided over by S. Srinivasa

Iyengar, a former President of the Congress. It was an All-India function.

Mahatma Gandhi, in his message, paid a glowing tribute to the services rendered to the country by Vijiaraghavachariar. He said that he was delighted to hear that leading men of all parties had combined to do Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar honour on the eve of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Congress. He thought it was in the fitness of things that our countrymen should do honour to one who, by common consent, was the Grand Old Man, not only of South India but of India. Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar's long and distinguished services would be long remembered, said Gandhiji, who prayed that God might keep him amongst them for many years to come.

Here are a few messages of tribute paid by eminent public men of India.

Sir A. P. Patro, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, said "Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar was among the foremost of national heroes. He inaugurated the National Congress, with courage and strength of conviction, undaunted by opposition. He always manifested unwavering faith in India's highest destiny and laboured incessantly for reaching the goal. His is a long career of disinterested national service worthy of emulation. He never sought the limelight. May he be spared long to guide India to attain its ultimate goal".

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, wrote: "To us of a younger generation Sjt. Chakravarti

Dr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar
GRAND OLD MAN OF INDIA

Vijiaraghavachariar's life is an example and inspiration. Having commenced his career of public service before many of us were born, he has carried it on with a singular singleness of purpose and devotion. In spite of many storms which have blown he has held his loyalty to the Congress steadfastly, and even when he has not seen eye to eye with all the details of its policy and programme, he has not swerved from the position that the great national institution should be supported and strengthened. He has never allowed himself to be party to the creation of any other rival organization and has tried to influence it from within. Even at this advanced age, we hardly ever miss his warning or his support whenever any momentous question comes up for consideration. His study of constitutional law and constitutions of the world enable him to contribute fresh ideas and fresh view-points to any discussion in which he takes part. It is a wonder to many how even now he manages to keep himself posted with the latest developments in politics and how he comes forward on all critical occasions with his suggestions. Congressmen naturally honour him for his steadfast loyalty to it; even those who do not agree with him in politics also honour him for those qualities of head and heart with which nature has endowed him and for his great work extending over more than half a century. In honouring him we are really honouring ourselves. May he be spared to us for many a long year to come to help and guide us and to see the fruition of his labours so devotedly and selflessly given to the country".

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya earnestly prayed that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar should live for hundred years for further service and glory of motherland and enjoying the highest esteem of our countrymen.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu wired: "Loving tribute to our veteran warrior".

Sardar Vallabhai Patel congratulated the people of Madras on their recognition of the Grand Old Man's meritorious services to the National Congress for an unbroken period of fifty years. 'It is a matter of joy', he said, 'that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is amongst us on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the National Congress which also is the Golden Jubilee of his service to the Nation. He is one of the pioneers of that august body which has won the admiration and respect of the whole Nation. May he live long to give us his ripe experience and wisdom in our efforts to reach the final goal and enjoy the fruits of his guidance when Swaraj is established'.

Sir Mirza Ismail said: 'Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is one of the most noted public men of India, a place which he has attained by his great qualities of head and heart. The best part of his life has been consecrated to the service of the Motherland in active association with the Indian National Congress. Fearless and independent, intensely patriotic and animated by liberal instincts and views, Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar combines a vivid and vigorous personality with a fundamental loyalty to causes to which he has been attracted. Therein lies, to my

mind, the secret of the high esteem in which he has always been held by his countrymen. To few men has fallen the honour such as his countrymen are doing today'. Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. M. R. Jayakar, N. C. Kelkar, C. Y. Chinthamani, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, and others paid their respective tributes to the veteran leader and statesman.

Welcoming Vijiaraghavachariar, C. R. Srinivasan declared: "The function is unique in the annals of the Madras Province and the country. We have met to honour one of the greatest sons of India who had become famous in the province of Madras as a doughty fighter and a dauntless champion of public rights even before the Congress was founded." After recalling Vijiaraghavachariar's services to the country, he said: 'Men and women of different creeds and communities have joined together to extend to him this public honour. It is not often that men of different schools of thought meet together on a common platform; and to the many services that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar has rendered to this country, he has added one more today by bringing them all together on this platform".

S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the President, said: "We have met here to pay a tribute of affection and respect to one who for half a century and more has served the country truly and well not only in this province but throughout India. The Public Address which is going to be presented will only firmly seal the grateful admiration and just recognition of those

very valuable and strenuous services which, in the years of his youth and middle age, our distinguished countryman rendered to India and the wise counsel and advice and the cordial cooperation and assistance which he gave to all and sundry in all parts of India whether it be the Indian National Congress or the Hindu Mahasabha or any other institution or national activity in this country. I am certainly proud to be associated with the function as a life-long admirer of his. I think his life is valuable to us for the salient lessons which it teaches." Stressing the moral and political aspects of the life of the Grand Old Man of India, Srinivasa Iyengar said that these aspects were the only imperishable things that would be of any value to this or future generations. He paid a tribute to Vijiaraghavachariar for 'his sterling honesty of purpose, fearlessness, independence of character and independence of thought and a sleepless vigilance over the rights and duties of his countrymen'. He continued: 'Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar set an example of suffering for the sake of his conviction even before he joined the Congress. You must recognise that to be a pioneer in this Province, or in any Province, of public life over half a century ago is quite a different proposition from leadership of people in these days. It was in those days all a jungle. The bureaucrat was enthroned in his high seat and conditions were quite different and patriotism was only a word in the dictionary and nobody knew it. In those days, real leadership was difficult of achievement; in those days, to have fought and emerged into public life, to have been a path-finder

through tractless jungles, with pitfalls and dangers and wild beasts, is certainly a thing of which any man may be proud and of which we ought to be proud; in these days with tarred roads it is easier. When parties and organizations exist it is not so difficult. But to realise conditions in those days, you must go back in your imagination to the story of a man who unaided, out of his inner convictions, came out and did what he could, in the face of much misunderstanding and unpopularity,—and against his own interests,—and of various other inconveniences to which he was put in, shouldered the burden which he voluntarily took up. I owe to Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar what little partriotism I have. Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar was identified with racial self-respect which ought to be the really abiding trait of an Indian. He understood the word *patriotism* in that sense. The racial selfrespect and patriotism, if properly implemented, will lead to racial consolidation throughout the length and breadth of India. And, for the extent you have succeeded,—I do not say you have succeeded in full—you must express a deep debt of gratitude to a man like Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar. Of Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar's part in the Congress I will only say that over the stormy session of the Nagpur Congress, where a new orientation was given to public life, the reverberations of which are still felt, if not percieved, you will see that he worthily presided. As late as 1920, he was esteemed by the whole country as fit to occupy the Presidential Chair and that at a most momentous session of the Congress. As a Congress leader he has done distinguished service.

As a pre-Congress politician and as a member of the Madras Legislative Council where he fought the much more stalwart predecessors of the present Civilians, he certainly had the affection of his contemporaries". He concluded with these words: "I will only say that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar has followed a rule of life which, I think, is a just one and most of us, at any rate the old men, will agree. I do not think he will agree he is old. I think and he thinks he is still young, prepared to break a lance with any one today or tomorrow. But as I told you he has acted on the principle 'Neither love your life nor hate it; but what thou livest, live well'. I will also pay him this negative tribute,—I consider it a high and valuable one although it be negative—he has not tampered with weights and measures".

C. Rajagopalachari considered it a privilege to be associated with this function. Said he: Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is a sort of father or an uncle to me. I remember even now,—when I first went to Salem to practise at the Bar, when I was a lad of twenty-one,—the trepidation with which I went to his room. From that time I looked upon him as my father. All of you know him as a politician. I know of him as a member of the Bar. If there is one thing to be remembered by all lawyers in this country, it is their proper and legitimate place in politics. That was the first lesson that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar taught me in Salem. That lesson was remembered for a long time in Salem but I am afraid it is being forgotten of late. It was Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar who first taught the

lesson that the lawyer had a legitimate function to discharge in politics and that was one of the lessons they had to learn from him. Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar figures not as a person, but represents the spirit of patriotism in a continual and unbroken line of succession from the time that India began to feel her way towards freedom up till now. Today is an occasion when we all of us should unite to honour him and it has been properly done in the address which is presented to him. It is really a national function and this is a proper function on the eve of the Golden Jubilee of the Indian National Congress. The other great lesson which we must learn from his life is courage, which he showed at a time when courage was a very rare thing indeed. In those days it was very difficult to set an example of courage and he did that. It is as well that you should remember that he was the first to go to prison. It is well to remember that, in these days, in honouring him, we are honouring an institution, ourselves and the nation. We hope and pray, along with the people who have just sent messages, that Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar will live with us to see Swaraj in all its reality in our land".

In the name of the public of South India, C. N. Muthurangam Mudaliar presented the address to Vijiaraghavachariar. The *Address* was enclosed in a beautiful ivory frame and was decorated with silver and gold carvings denoting the 1885 and 1934 Sessions of the Congress and had the picture of Bharat Matha embossed in gold in the centre and

the photographs of A. O. Hume, C. Vijiaraghavachariar and Mahatma Gandhi at the bottom. The following is the text of the address:

"On behalf of the public of South India, we desire to express our profound and grateful appreciation of the many and valued services you have rendered to the Motherland. Great are the changes you have lived to witness during your long and distinguished career of public work; greatest of them all is the fact that the people of this country have grown progressively and politically self-conscious and claim today the same powers and privileges that other people in free countries possess. Among the great men of India who possessed the vision to see ahead of time, and worked to bring about these changes, you occupy an assured place and as South Indians we are proud of the part you have played in the nation-building movement.

"As a man, you have shown an independence of outlook and character, which have been a source of inspiration and guidance to many who have followed you. As a student of politics, you have ever striven to equip yourself with the knowledge and experience of other countries, and sought to apply them to the conditions and circumstances in this country. As a member of the Legislature, your knowledge of Constitutional Law and Practice has rendered you invaluable for Committee work and earned for your speeches on the floor of the House, the attention and respect of all. As a Congressman, you have set an example of patriotic endeavour and ceaseless concern

for national self-respect, which have earned for the institution an enviable place in the heart of the country. And on the eve of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the great institution you have helped to found, it is but fitting that we should give public expression to our feelings of gratitude for your long and distinguished service in the national cause.

"Age has not damped your enthusiasm to serve nor diminished your ardour for the freedom of our country. May you be spared long to see India attain Swaraj and take her rightful place in the comity of Nations".

Replying to the address, Vijiaraghavachariar said: "My first duty, and the most pleasant duty, is to tender my most heartfelt thanks to the organisers—or to begin with the beginning, to the organiser and then to the organisers—of this function and the public whose cordial sympathy with the organisers is due this honour done to me. This is the proudest day in my life. Probably, you will appreciate if I say that it will be the greatest comfort to me during the remaining short span of my life, if it may please God to give me that,—I make no prayer or solicitation for it. Few of you, I think, would understand that old age rests upon pleasing recollections than upon actualities; very few, if any, of those present here, I believe, are as old as I am or have made an approach to my age. This function, and the incidents of this morning will take the foremost place among the pleasing recollections that would sustain me in the evening of my life.

"Now, I come to the second duty. I must confess to you that I am at a loss and I feel very nervous. I do not know what to say or what is the appropriate thing to be said this morning. I have a mandate that whatever I may say should be as an *all-party man* and not as a party-man. I recognise the force of that mandate. But the difficulty is how to carry it out. I am called upon to speak about matters of public interest today, but at the same time, talk as a Judge and not as an Advocate. I shall make an endeavour to do so, and if I make remarks which are rambling or are wrong, I rely upon your indulgence to forgive me alike as to the time I take and as to inaccuracies that you may detect.

"It would take a very long time if I invite your attention to the exact position we are in today, where we are, why we are there, and what we should do, if we are not to remain satisfied with that position but are to rescue and raise ourselves from it. Possibly, you may view this question in three aspects. One of my advisers just now is Professor Yone Noguchi of Japan, who spoke the other day and said that while he recognised that the three ancient countries, India, China and Japan, have a great common heritage in civilization, arts, religion, and what not, he thought that everything in India seemed to be in confusion. It is in observation which must commend itself to you in view of the fact that it was said not to criticise—he had absolutely no object in exaggerating that aspect—but to help us to understand and get rid of it. He said everything seemed to him to be in

confusion and I fear it is so. It is my personal conviction that, at this stage, notwithstanding the advantages you have derived from public agitation, notwithstanding that the consciousness of the masses of the people has been roused, we are in a state of anarchy. Our ruling classes have taken advantage of it and have imposed upon us one of the very worst constitutions.

"You may view the problem in three ways, where we are, what we should do, and what is our exact ideal. On these three points, I dwell just a few minutes. I need not say here that if we rely upon some of the well-known authorities, Max Muller, Sir William Jones and Sleeman, if you take only a few of them, we must be justly proud that India was not only one of the civilized countries in the ancient world but it was the most civilized country. In fact, we were not merely a thinking and meditative and passive nation, but we were also a very active, energetic and combative nation. Soon we ceased, for reasons which it is impossible now to diagnose, to be combative. We thought of the divine doctrine of Ahimsa too much. We applied that doctrine and acted on that doctrine not only between man and man and woman and woman in private activities, but also in public capacity as amongst invaders. The result was India became subject to foreign invasions. Be that as it may, the Moghul Empire began to fall for reasons which we need not go into now. It began to decline and fall just at the time when European companies came in. Among these the East India Company also

came. I need not tell you more. Our ancestors became officers and sepoys. Our ruling chiefs selected among these companies, the English East India Company as the saviour of India from anarchy. I mention this fact to you to show that it is very wrong and haughty on the part of our rulers to say that India is a conquered country. India is not a country conquered by England. In the main India was no more conquered than England was conquered by Prince William of Orange in 1688. That is to say, unlike his name-sake, William of Normandy who conquered England, the Prince of Orange went there as Sovereign by invitation. The English East India Company became sovereign of the greater part of India with the assistance of the people of this country, with their money and with their blood.

"I need not take you through all the incidents that then took place. Take the first seige of Arcot. What did the Sepoys say when the food supply failed? They said to the Europeans 'Very well, you Europeans require more sustenance than we, and so you take the solid food and we will live upon gruel'. Take again Murari Rao of Gooty or take the Mysore dynasty. The Mysore dynasty stepped to the aid of the English Company in spite of every difficulty when some of their adherents were molested and even assassinated. Therefore, I say the English East India Company became sovereign of India with our consent and our assistance alike in money and blood. No doubt one or two Provinces were conquered such as the Punjab and Burma. But that should not make England say

that India is a conquered country and that she would treat it as a conquered country.

"It is necessary for us to show that in sentiments at least we need not be ashamed of the position we are in. We can justly feel proud of it. But if by this time we have not got self-government and if England has not allowed us self-government, let me say that while their conduct is deplorable, it is consequential upon our own conduct. It is consequential, because we did not act unitedly or talk with one voice.

"Here, let me take one other person who spoke only a few days ago, Mr. C. G. Macartney, the great sportsman. What did he say of the Central India XI? It is worth our while to note what he exactly said. His was not simply a negative criticism. He said his team was about to be defeated, but yet owing to the errors committed by the home team, the match ended in a draw. He said that the individual capabilities of the members of the team of Indian cricketers were excellent, but that they made errors for want of cooperation. In fact, the team did not do the 'team-work' properly. The Australians, by implication, with lesser capabilities, displayed greater team-work and they at least succeeded in making the match a draw. Otherwise, they would have been defeated. I ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to think of ways and means by which you can henceforward talk with one voice for the whole country.

"My friend, the Mayor of Madras[1], alluded to my orthodoxy. I may at once tell you that people may be very heterodox and yet hate each other. And a man or a woman may be very orthodox and yet his or her love for the whole country may be unbounded. What I do wish to say is that at a very early age I came in contact with what Abraham Lincoln said and what he did afterwards in the Civil War in America which was due to his philanthropy and his desire to make the Negroes free. What did he say? 'Have faith, firm faith, in the cause, but with malice to none and with charity to all'. I will tell my friend, though he deems me to be bigoted, I have ever acted with the firm belief in the cause which I have undertaken, with no malice to anybody and with charity to all. That is what we ought to do. Unless we take to that team-work, give up party spirit or reserve some of it for future action, there is no chance of our getting Swaraj.

"Now, Swaraj itself is capable of two meanings. One is absolute independence separate from England and unconnected with England. The other is substantial independence, but with the present organic relations between the United Kingdom and India continued. I need hardly tell you I do not want to please the rulers or anybody, but I am for the latter. I have been for the latter and in the Madras Congress I had the misfortune to differ from our friend, Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar. I joined Mrs. Besant and others who said they opposed separation of India from

(1) Abdul Hameed Khan

England. You are entitled to say Englishmen have been misconducting themselves more and more. But still I adhere to my original idea and I also ask you to hear what Mahatmaji told Lord Irwin on this matter. He told Lord Irwin that for his part he would be content with the substance of Independence. Remember, 'Substance of Independence'. I tell you why I adhere to that. I adhere to that for two reasons. One is we can sooner reach our political salvation by agitation—revolution, if you like, but bloodless revolution. The other cannot be easily had and even if we should have it, it would be after considerable loss of men, money, blood and what not. And we shall soon be in a state of anarchy. The provocation given by England recently is great. Take for instance the statement of a man like Mr. Winston Churchill. He was one of those who said during the Great War that India should soon be given Dominion Status. When he was taxed with it recently, he behaved like a lying witness in the witness-box when taxed with a different previous statement of his own, and said that his previous statement was worth nothing and that his present statement was the good one. He said that his previous statement was made in a festive mood. I do not know what he meant. Was he enjoying a festival because we Indians were suffering so much for the Emperor in men and money? Whether he was then enjoying a festival, or not, it is for you to say, which is the true mentality—the mentality which he now displays? What I would suggest to you is this. This is a passing phase in English life, as passing a phase as acceptance by the

Foreign Secretary of the Paris proposals. I feel this will not be long. How long it will be depends upon the cooperation with which we will be able to work in the future.

"In this connection, I may tell you there is another resource which you have never thought of, which you have not hitherto even thought of exploring, I mean our position in the League of Nations. You know well that no nation, unless it is self-governing and sovereign, can be a State-member of the League of Nations. How does it happen that a nation which is not self-governing or sovereign is still a member of the League of Nations? The only explanation is this. During the Great War, India was treated *de facto* as a self-governing and sovereign nation. They all said, including Mr. Winston Churchill, more than once, that India would soon be made a Dominion and placed within the scope of the Statute of Westminister and would be released from all control by the Parliament of England. By the way, I would say the Parliament of England has no business to interfere with us. What I suggest to you is this. Here is a resource. Soon after the Ethiopian affair is over, we have to go to Geneva and agitate and call upon States, particularly the smaller ones, to note that our position is an anomalous one; and that it is in violation of the Covenant of the League, and of the basic principles on which it was built by Woodrow Wilson and others. We are the only Nation among the 56 or 58 that make up the League, who are not self-governing or sovereign, and therefore,

our being there is in violation of the Covenant. Although some of us have urged this on the attention of Indian leaders, we have not succeeded. We must carry on our propaganda at Geneva through our delegates and others and draw the attention of the smaller nations to the anomalous position that India occupies in the League. I feel we are bound to succeed. England has now taken up an attitude where she is bound to stand by the League of Nations. It was overshadowed for a few days by the careless conduct of the former Secretary of State for India but the consciousness of the people of England was roused. Today we are in a position to say that England will ever stand by the Covenant and will not betray it and the League will not think of dismissing England. That being so, England cannot continue long to be a member of the League of Nations without doing us justice, without making us a self-governing and sovereign nation. We are now in relation to England, where Ethiopia would be if Italy were to conquer her.

"I have been in correspondence with many persons and I may tell you that this anomalous position must be got rid of and will be got rid of. Mr. James agrees with me that it is an anomalous position and that it is because of this anomalous position that we do not command sufficient international influence. So that if you begin to explore this resource everybody in India will cooperate with us. The domiciled Europeans and Anglo-Indians and all the Indians are bound to cooperate with us, and our salvation is full and near. We shall be soon

placed in respect of the Statute of Westminister on a par with Canada and Australia and we shall get rid of the authority of Parliament. As I stated, the Parliament of England is an interloper. The East India Company obtained its charter from Queen Elizabeth without even the knowledge of Parliament. Afterwards the East India Company surrendered its sovereignty. The language of the document was that it had held India in trust for the Crown and not for the people of England represented by Parliament. Therefore, our great fortune and misfortune began simultaneously. Our great fortune was that Queen Victoria solemnly proclaimed that she would make no difference between her white subjects and her Indian subjects. Our misfortune was that simultaneously Parliament, which had been exercising control over the East India Company and very often doing us some service, became the real ruler of India, and it has been playing the tyrant all along. We have not realised this position. If we wish to reach our salvation, political and economic, Parliament should cease to have any control over or voice in the shaping of our destinies. Our agitation is therefore two-fold. We should adhere to the Crown and continue to be loyal to the Emperor of India and at the same time get into the Statute of Westminister and tell Parliament 'Be gone, never come again'. Our self-government and sovereignty will begin from that day. And for this purpose I say agitation among the League of Nations' members, especially the smaller ones, would be of immense use. England would have no answer to you as soon as the question is raised,

either in the Council or Assembly of the League of Nations."

In a leader, *the Hindu* described the function at the Victoria Public Hall as a unique event in the history of Indian Nationalism. Indeed it was. To have been able to serve our motherland for over half a century is a remarkable achievement especially when the earlier years of his work were extremely difficult unlike today. 'A man of lesser courage than Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar would have broken under the ordeal. A patriot to the core, he has always exhibited a fearlessness in upholding his convictions which is a shining example to all who aspire to serve the country'.[1] And it was fitting that V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar characterised him as the *Bhishma of Indian Politics.*

Fifty years had passed since the birth of the Congress. Fifty years and more had passed since Vijiaraghavachariar's entry into public life. His contribution to the development of Indian Nationalism needed no recounting. He had helped to found the Indian National Congress. His correspondence with A. O. Hume, the Father of the Congress, reveals what powerful influence he commanded and how his views were respected by Hume, Naoroji and others. He had championed the cause of the people and fought relentlessly for their rights until they were established. He always considered himself a servant of the Nation and never swerved from his loyalty to the Institution

(1) The Hindu

which he helped to found and to which he was proud to belong. It was indeed a great honour done to him by our countrymen by associating his Golden Jubilee Celebrations with that of the Indian National Congress which has taught the people the true meaning of the word 'SWARAJ' and which has enabled the millions in this land to reach their goal; and that this position India was able to attain was due to the selfless services and sacrifices of the noble patriarchs like Vijiaraghavachariar and Naoroji, Malaviya and Gokhale, Tilak and Gandhi.

XII

CRIPPS MISSION AND AFTER

The Indian problem remained unsolved. The Round Table Conferences did not bear any fruit. The keen desire of the British to present India with a new constitution was there. A White Paper was framed and submitted to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament over which Lord Linlithgow presided. The Joint Committee amended the proposals of the White Paper and on their recommendations a Bill was introduced in Parliament, which became the Government of India Act, 1935. It had novel features. It contemplated an Indian Federation consisting of British Indian Provinces and of those States that will accede to it, though the constituent units would greatly differ in their status and powers. The Governor-General of the Indian Federation occupied a unique position wielding great powers and he could make or mar the growth of the new Union.

The Act of 1935 did not meet with Vijiaraghavachariar's approval. He deprecated the idea of having a federal constitution for India on the model suggested by the Act of 1935, as, in his view, the acceptance of federalism as embodied in the Act would lead to the disruption of the country and retard its progress. Naresh Chandra Roy, in his book *The Constitutional System of India*, says: 'There

were very few public men in this country who did not become enamoured of the constitutional development of India along federal lines. Only Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar of Salem who had presided over the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress (1920) and Mr. K. Natarajan of the Indian Social Reformer of Bombay were the outstanding public men to stand against the current. They were definitely and pronouncedly of opinion that the growth of the Indian Constitution on the basis of federal principles would be a menace to the maintenance of our national solidarity. There was already an inherent tendency in this country towards separatism. Centrifugal forces had been in fact too dominant throughout the whole course of Indian history. Indian nationalism was but an infant sentiment and required persistent nursing and careful feeding. Common government was an important factor of its growth. If, therefore, the Unitary principle was abandoned and different autonomous authorities in the country were set up, they would give a fillip to the dormant separatist forces which would not take long to engulf the national structure. If nationalism was not to be undermined and political unity of the country was not to be endangered, it was essential that the Unitary system should continue undisturbed. But Messrs. Vijiaraghavachariar and Natarajan only cried in the wilderness. The rest of our publicists threw themselves listlessly into the current and federalism became the fashionable political demand'.

Whether others agreed with him or not, Vijiaraghavachariar held steadfastly to his views that a federal constitution as set up in the Act of 1935 was unsuitable to India and would in no way help forward our political progress. He, on the other hand, asserted that the Provinces should derive all their powers from the Government of India and there should be no question of breaking up a Unitary India and granting sovereign status to the Provinces, which, if done, would be perilous to our nation. Twenty five years ago, he said: "If the Provinces are made 'more or less' sovereign, then, not only the existing Provinces but also the future Provinces such as Sind, Baluchistan and North West Frontier Province may decline to enter the proposed Indian Federation and may prefer to remain isolated sovereign States or form new or true federations among themselves or any of them may even consent to be merged in Afganistan". Vijiaraghavachariar even drew the attention of our countrymen to the plea of Sir Mahomed Iqbal for a Mahommedanised North West India and warned them that by accepting the federal plan India's unity and progress would be shattered and ruined. He had for twenty five years repeatedly advised his countrymen not to accept federalism as the basis of our constitutional set-up. N. D. Varadachari, an eminent Constitutionalist, writes: 'Vijiaraghavachariar's critics who thought at one time that he was wasting his time on academic issues or taking an untenable position have come to realise that those were the words of a ripe statesman who had seen the course of events with a clear vision and had tried to the best of his ability

to warn his countrymen against grave developments which imperilled the nation in its roots'. In a sense *Pakistan* was a logical corollary to the adoption of the federalist concept of government propounded by the British and accepted by Indian leaders without a full understanding of its implications.

The British Government were bent upon working the Act of 1935. With the inauguration of Provincial Autonomy under the 1935 Act, a new chapter in our country's history began. Wardha was the place where leaders assembled to decide on the next step. Gandhiji was with them. After prolonged discussion, they decided to give the new legislatures a trial. Gandhiji persuaded the Congress to accept office in the Provinces without sacrificing its principles. Earlier, Vijiaraghavachariar had been in correspondence with Gandhiji on this issue. In October, 1935, Gandhiji wrote: 'Dear friend, I have your very interesting letter. I simply cannot tax my mind about offices. I do not even know that the Constitution is coming. That it has received the King's assent is not of much consequence. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip. The inauguration is still far off. Many events may happen to upset the apple cart and why should I worry over a thing which is highly problematical? But I can say this, that if the Constitution does actually begin to work and if I find that there is no escape from taking office, that is if the Congress is represented in the Legislatures, I would not hesitate to say so. Just at present

I can see many an escape from the predicament'.[1] And the directive came from the leaders assembled in Wardha. In eight of the eleven Provinces Congressmen were at the helm of the administration. Vijiaraghavachariar welcomed the decision of the Congress and considered the acceptance of office by Congressmen as a great step forward towards our cherished goal of Independence.

The new experiment met with tremendous success. Popular support to the Governments was signalled everywhere. The British Governors did not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Provinces. The entire governmental machinery was in the hands of the Ministry. The aim of the popular governments was to serve the people and they drew inspiration from Gandhiji who always insisted on national unity, service, and discipline.

The Congress governments in the Provinces were functioning well but world events altered the course of events. The Second World War broke out. The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, committed India to it without formal consultation of her leaders—a bad tactical move. The Congress protested against this and demanded a declaration of Britain's War aims and their application with regard to India's freedom. The Congress' demand could well be stated in the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who said: "The first step must therefore be a declaration of India's

(1) From Gandhiji's letter to Vijiaraghavachariar

full freedom. This has to be followed by its application now in so far as is possible in order to give the people effective control of the governance of India and the prosecution of War on India's behalf. Then only it is possible to create psychological conditions which can lead to popular support. Autocratic and ordinance rule will alienate public sympathy and lead to conflict........India wants to forget the past of conflict and wants to stretch out her hand in comradeship. But she can do so only as a free nation on terms of equality. She must be convinced that that past is over and we are all striving for a new order not only in Europe but in Asia and the World. Her invitation to the British Government is on behalf of all those in the World, who believe in peace, freedom and democracy. It will be a tragedy for all of us if the deep significance of this gesture is not appreciated and full response not made to it. Such a response will hearten people all over the world and will be a greater blow to Nazism than victory on the battle field".[1]

In the middle of October came the Viceregal Declaration announcing the British Government's attitude towards India. It stated that Dominion Status was India's ultimate goal and it was too early to define Britain's War aims. It said that after the War the Reforms Act would be revised, that India would be consulted in framing her constitution; and it gave an assurance to the minorities that their rights would be protected. It declared that the

(1) From a speech of Jáwaharlal Nehru

largest measure of agreement practicable between the communities in India should be achieved before Indians were given responsible posts at the Centre. Further, the Declaration emphasised that a Consultative Group from the major parties in the country along with the representatives of the Princes would be set up to advice the Governor-General on important matters that might arise. It concluded with the usual appeal for unity among the different communities in India.

The Viceregal Declaration was far from an answer to the legitimate demands of the Congress. The generous offer by the Congress was rejected. Mahatma Gandhi was critical of the declaration and said in these characteristic words: 'The Congress asked for bread and it has got a stone instead'. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Vijiaraghavachariar, Malaviya, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari and others raised their voice of protest at this insult to the nation from the British Government. The Congress declared that under the circumstances it was impossible for them to help Britain in the War.

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha to give the directive to the nation. It was decided to withdraw the Ministries from the Provinces where Congress held power as a mark of protest against the British Government's attitude. The Madras Cabinet headed by C. Rajagopalachari was the first to tender its resignation and get out of office in accordance with the resolution passed in the Legislative Assembly. The resolution stated that in consonance

with the avowed aims of the present war, it was essential in order to secure the cooperation of the Indian people that the principles of democracy be applied to India and her policy be guided by her people, and that India should be regarded as an independent nation entitled to frame her own constitution and further that suitable action should be taken in so far as it is possible in the immediate present to give effect to that principle in regard to the present governance of India. Likewise, in the seven other Provinces, the Congress ministries tendered their resignation with the result that the British Governors took over the administration. Many leading publicists thought the resignation of the ministries was a wrong move. Vijiaraghavachariar considered the decision of resignation from office to be hasty, although he could well understand that once the directive was given by the Congress, the resignation was a matter of discipline to be obeyed. In his view much could be done with power in our hands and Congressmen could fight for their legitimate rights from within the Cabinets. By such an attitude they could get the bar of world opinion on their side. Further, he thought, that if the Congress got out of office voluntarily, that would give room for the British Government to placate the minorities and play them against the majority community by their policy of 'divide and rule' under the dignified phrase of 'protecting the rights of the minorities'. He appealed to the people of India to realise that all castes and communities in the country belonged to one race—the Aryan. So long as we did not realise this unity, he said, we would never be an

independent nation and Britain would be able to keep us under subjection. Events that followed confirmed Vijiaraghavachariar's belief, and the British Government with utter disregard of the nationalist feelings of the masses carried on the governance of the country by ordinance rule. They placated the Muslim League and the other minority communities. People found themselves in a difficult position as the mischief had been well played by the British in India.

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the Congress President, told the British that they must concede India's legitimate demands and that there was no room left for any one to doubt that the British policy remained as it always had been and that talks about democracy and resistance to aggression were not meant to apply to India.

Addressing a public meeting in Salem in June, 1940, in what was his last public speech, Vijiaraghavachariar told the British Government that unless immediate Dominion Status was granted to India, she could not get India's willing cooperation in the war. He argued that once Dominion Status was granted to India she would help England not merely as a member of the Commonwealth but in her own interest and for the safety of humanity at large. Alluding to the offer of help to the Allies by President Roosevelt he said: 'It was not sufficient if the United States only offered help and did not enter the war actively on the side of the Allies. It was incumbent on Mr. Roosevelt to join the Allies so as to uphold

his predecessor's treaty and defeat the ambitions of Germany in the fond hope that she could overawe the world by her military frightfulness. There was a second reason why America should wage war on the side of the Allies and that was the fact that France had assisted the Americans in days of yore to get their independence, which U. S. A. should now remember.' Declaring that India had a three-fold duty, duty to herself, duty to the Allies and duty to mankind as a whole which would prompt her sons and daughters to do their best to help England at this time and to enable her to do so she must be made a Dominion at once, he said: "It was no use asking India to wait till the war ended. It was equally futile to ask her to wait until the internal differences among the various communities and the minorities were adjusted because it would be tantamount to saying that India should wait until the arrival of doomsday for her God-given freedom. I want that England should confer Dominion Status on India at once without any further delay or any more disappointments. A law might of course be enacted that every minority community should get its due share of the seats in the legislature and the public service according to the ratio of its population in correct proportion. If England had not been foolish and shortsighted in her policy of distrusting Indians and keeping them disarmed but had, on the contrary, trained the Indians in all military equipments, the position would have now been different, since India would have a huge army on land, a powerful navy and an efficient aerial fleet, to cope with Hitler and

to nip Nazism in the bud. England, by her mistake, had left India disarmed and unarmed and unfit to take the field at this hour of peril against Germany and she had thus injured herself more than she had injured India. I am an optimist and I would ask England to take up the work because it was not yet too late to mend matters. I appeal to Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, to immediately grant Dominion Status to India and thus equip the huge population of India, which would stand England in good stead at this time of her trial and tribulation. India was capable of assisting England to a degree not dreamt of by the British people".[1]

The leaders appealed in vain. The British Government turned a deaf ear to the Congress. The Congress Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. met in Poona. C. Rajagopalachari carried the day. The famous Poona Offer by the Congress was a compromise formula. The Congress asked the British Government to recognise India's Independence and set up a National Government at the Centre, as such a step would not involve radical constitutional changes, but it would enable India to help Britain in the War as an equal partner.

The current of public opinion swung in favour of the Congress. Meanwhile, the Muslim League, under the guidance of M. A. Jinnah, began obstructionist tactics. It made extravagant claims by demanding parity of representation between Hindus

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's speech

and Muslims in the Viceroy's Executive Council on top of its other preposterous demands. The British Government were unwilling to part with power. To the Poona Offer the Viceroy replied by saying that after the conclusion of the War a representative body consisting of the principal elements in India's national life would be set up to device the framework of the new constitution and that it was his intention to invite a certain number of representative Indians to join his Executive Council. That was all that the Congress got—a vague promise regarding an uncertain future and the mere expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Gandhiji and other leaders met the Viceroy and pressed their demands but the discussions bore no fruitful results. The Congress made its position very clear and repeated its offer by the resolutions passed at Bombay, Bardoli, and Wardha. The Congress declared that 'its sympathies lay inevitably with the peoples who were subjects of aggression and who were fighting for their freedom but only a free and independent India having a national government could be in a position to undertake the defence of the country on a national basis and be of help in furtherence of the larger causes that were emerging from the storm of war'. The British Government refused to budge an inch. The Congress decided to fight the 'arrogant imperialism', but fight it with the weapon of Non-Violent Non-Cooperation. The mantle of leadership once again fell on Gandhiji's shoulders with the result that the Individual Civil Disobedience was started.

Vinobha Bhave was the first to offer Satyagraha. The Government arrested all those who did propaganda against the war effort. Leader after leader was imprisoned. Gandhiji took the responsibility of choosing men and women who offered Satyagraha. The nation rallied round him. Protests came from different quarters denouncing the British policy in India. Vijiaraghavachariar condemned the government's policy of arresting the passive resisters as unlawful, for, in his view, the action of the passive resisters did not amount to a *State Offence*. When the Governor of Madras, Sir Arthur Hope, called on him in Salem, he voiced his countrymen's vehement opposition to the British Government's attitude towards the Congress and warned the Government that if they persisted in such acts, they would alienate public sympathy, and asserted that the Congress' demand for the recognition of the Independence of India and the establishment of a National Government at the Centre to evoke popular support was fully justified and that Britain could not refuse these just demands in the face of world opinion.

The British Government were forced to change their policy towards India because of sudden developments in the international situation converging on the British Empire and in particular in the Far East. The unrest in India was gaining momentum. Swift action alone would save the day. The British War Cabinet decided to send Sir Stafford Cripps, the Lord Privy Seal, to India with a Draft Declaration. Sir Stafford had succeeded earlier in Russia and won

the support of that great country. The British Government chose the best man for the job as Sir Stafford's sympathies for India were well known.

Sir Stafford Cripps presented India with the War Cabinet's Draft Declaration and its text was made known to the country on the 29th March, 1942.

The text ran as follows:—"His Majesty's Government having considered the anxieties expressed in this country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regard to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which, they propose, shall be taken for the earliest possible realisation of Self-Government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, associated with the United Kingdom and other Dominions by common allegiance to the Crown but equal to them in every respect and in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic and external affairs.

His Majesty's Government, therefore, make the following declaration:

(a) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps shall be taken to set up in India in the manner described hereafter an elected body, charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India.

(b) Provision shall he made, as set out below, for the participation of Indian States in the Constitution-making body.

(c) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to :—

(1) The right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as the Indian Union and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.

(2) The signing of a Treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the Constitution-making body. This Treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision, in accordance with undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in future its relationship to other member-States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its Treaty arrangements so far as this may be required in the new situation.

(d) The constitution-making body shall be composed as follows unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of the hostilities:

Immediately upon the result being known of Provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of the hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of representatives of British India as a whole and with the same powers as British Indian members.

(e) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for, and retain, the control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organising to the full military, moral and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India, with the cooperation of the people of India.

His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the

leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations. Thus, they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help to the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India."

The Cripps Proposals, as they were popularly styled, evoked bitter criticism from all over the country. Vijiaraghavachariar was furious on reading the Draft Declaration as it envisaged a possible division of India. He studied the proposals over and over and was convinced that if we accepted the same, the unity of India would be destroyed and chaos would prevail in the country. He declared: "I feel thankful to the British Government for having decided to make British India a Dominion, fully equal to any other part of the British Commonwealth. But I deplore the provision permitting unwilling Provinces to separate themselves from the Union and become self-governing entities. This is novel and dangerous in the highest degree, unknown to history or political philosophy. The Provinces are not yet natural ones resting on linguistic basis. Assuming that they would be soon so or that they remain as they are now (and it is immaterial), to let the Provinces become independent is fraught with great danger. It will create Pakistan in more places than one—a fantastic and dangerous scheme—and the Dominion of India will consist of parts, if at all, scattered here and there. Neither England nor the British Empire nor India has the right to break up and dismember

this ancient country in this way, especially as Mr. Amery has after all recognised the fact that British India was not conquered by England. I am very much dissatisfied with this scheme. I would emphatically state that it would be rather better that we are left as we are, a subject nation, than be dismembered perilously in this way. I pray to God to maintain the unity of India!"[1]

Maulana Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and C. Rajagopalachari negotiated with Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of the Congress. They were for compromise. The Congress would not permit the country's disruption. Pandit Nehru said that they were going to fight for the essential unity of India and that India was going to be one in freedom. The non-accession clause in the Draft Declaration did not meet with the approval of the Congress. Mahatma Gandhi was pained to note the proposals which contemplated the splitting up of India into three parts, each having different ideas of governance.

The Congress leaders were dissatisfied with the Scheme as it did not give the people any voice with regard to the defence of India. They asserted that only when defence was transferred to Indian hands could they make the war a popular war and infuse into the minds of the millions that it was their duty to defend their motherland against foreign aggression. Though the Congress leaders would not accept the Cripps Proposals with regard to the future of India, yet they

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's statement to the Press

were prepared to help the war on the side of the Allies provided the Indians were given control over Defence and a National Government was established. But they would not fight as mere mercenaries. Maulana Azad wrote to Sir Stafford stating that the over-riding problem before all of them, and more especially before the Indians, was the defence of the country from aggression and invasion, and that the future, important as it was, would depend on what happened in the next few months and years. The Congress offered its hand of cooperation. The British did not grasp it and it was said that Commander-in-Chief Wavell refused to give the Indians any control over Defence. Col. Louis Johnson, President Roosevelt's Personal Representative in India, entered the scene at that stage and a successful formula was evolved by which an Indian Member would be in charge of the Defence Department with the exception of the functions relating to the conduct of the war which would be exercised by the Commander-in-Chief. An agreement was in sight. But, Sir Stafford suddenly decided to leave for England and announced that the negotiations had broken down.

When Sir Stafford arrived in India he told the Congress leaders that there would be a National Government which would function as a Cabinet and that the position of the Viceroy would be analogous to that of the King of England vis-a-vis his Cabinet. But, when the negotiations were nearing the stage of completion, it was a different story altogether. Sir Stafford put forward the strange argument that

'if there was a true National Government with a Cabinet of Indian leaders, untrammelled by any control by the Viceroy or the British Government, it meant the governance of India for an indefinite period by a set of persons nominated by the Indian parties, responsible to no legislature or electorate, incapable of being changed, and the majority of whom would be in a position to dominate large minorities. It was easy to understand that the great minorities in India would never accept such a system. Nor could His Majesty's Government, who had given pledges to those minorities, consent to their being placed unprotected while the existing constitution lasted under a simple and possible inimical majority rule. It would be a breach of all the pledges that they have given'.[1] And Sir Stafford went on to deal with the question of communal differences in India, the oft-repeated sermon by the British. In the end, what he offered was the Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council with the Viceroy exercising his full powers. The picture which Sir Stafford drew was entirely different from what he said on his arrival in India. Sir Stafford promised India a National Government but he could not keep his word. The eminent American Journalist, Louis Fischer, said: "Sir Stafford is in the British Government and doing the same wrong to India which he then (in 1940) charged against the British Government. For me this is the saddest phase of the entire Cripps Mission. If Cripps

(1) From the speech of Sir Stafford Cripps

had failed and remained the old Cripps, the tragedy would have been much smaller than it is".[1]

Mahatma Gandhi, characterised the Draft Declaration as 'that ill-fated Proposal'. 'It is a thousand pities', he said, 'that the British Government should have sent a proposal for dissolving the political deadlock, which on the face of it was too rediculous to find acceptance anywhere. And, it was a misfortune that the bearer should have been Sir Stafford Cripps, acclaimed as a radical among Radicals and a friend of India'.[2] The War Cabinet's Draft Declaration was unacceptable to all parties in India. The Congress rejected the proposals. The Muslim League rejected the scheme as it did not give them 'Pakistan'. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikhs rejected it on the ground that it affected the essential unity of India. Sir Stafford left India in a hurry. The entire negotiations broke down.

(1) From 'Imperialism unmasked' by Louis Fischer

(2) From Gandhiji's speech

XIII

THE WAY TO SWARAJ

"Faith in the destiny of India as the common home of Indians to whatever religion they may belong was cherished by Vijiaraghavachariar from his earliest days in public life. He believed in an Indian State where the State would be accepted as purely secular and allowed to function for common purposes such as defence, foreign affairs and economic development without being side-tracked into communal squabbles. So firmly was he persuaded that this was the only proper ideal for the country that he stood out for a Unitary Republic as being the best system of polity for our country. He was among the earliest publicists to foresee the dangers of separatist tendencies and to warn the people against them. Other leaders who had been attracted by the federal solution of the Indian Constitutional problems later on realised the disastrous consequences which would follow its adoption and lived to recant their views",[1] wrote one who was close to Vijiaraghavachariar.

The demand for separate and sovereign Muslim States in North-West and North-East India went far beyond the implications of federalism to which Vijiaraghavachariar had raised such cogent objections. He feared that once the separatist tendencies were allowed to grow, they would strike at

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

the very root of Indian unity. *Pakistan* appeared to him a suicidal contrivance. It would create many more problems than it ever solved and would set in motion the spirit of exclusiveness, faction and centrifugalism which had brought such ruin to the country in the past. He was never tired of telling his friends that visited him in his last days that India, united and strong will be the greatest Asiatic country and one of the most important of world powers; but that if she is rent into tatters, we could neither organise successfully, nor afford the arms for defence, nor develop moral power and political prestige sufficient to sustain this vital and glorious role.

Vijiaraghavachariar's undying faith in a United India made him advocate the rejection of Cripps's Proposals. Said he: "The British War Cabinet's Scheme entrusted to Sir Stafford Cripps is but a mixed blessing. The War Cabinet's promise to make India a Dominion at the end of the present hostilities was qualified by conditions which nullified the value of the promise. The decision of the Congress Working Committee to reject the Draft Declaration was inevitable. What is it that we, who have long aspired for the freedom of India and done our humble bit for the cause, have been aiming at? The main objective is the preservation of the unity of the country. And the War Cabinet's Scheme includes a provision for the vivisection of India. It allows Provinces to get out of the Dominion of India and become self-governing sovereignties. This is

strategy, a concealed strategy, to placate the Muslims of the school of Mr. Jinnah. For if Pakistan is established, both the new Pakistan and the new Hindustan will alike pass into foreign subjection once again. I question the right of any one to create such a vivisection. If this is done by others to us it is murder, and if we do it ourselves, it is suicide. It is worthwile to quote here the principle established by the League of Nations relating to minorities, namely, that minorities must not be allowed to create 'a State within a State' and break up the territorial and political unity of a country into a number of States independent of each other. I also wish to remind our countrymen and our friends abroad of the historic American precedent when a similar claim was made by the Southern States to secede from the United States. The celebrated President of U. S. A., Abraham Lincoln, fought the attempt and established the principle that a vociferous and disaffected minority cannot claim to establish itself as a new and independent sovereignty, even though every such State had the power to join the Union or not. If this is so of the United States which was formed previously of independent units, how much more inappropriate and absurd is the claim of sections of our people, who for the time being have however unreasonably developed anger towards their fellow countrymen to seek to destroy the unity of the Indian Nation, which had been a united and *Unitary State* all these years and whose life and culture have been one for centuries? History and political philosophy may be scorned by modern leaders, but it is because the lessons of history

and the principles of political philosophy were disregarded in the politics of the world that we are having these interminable and disastrous wars. If India is dismembered as proposed in the War Cabinet's Scheme, the injury will be irreparable.

"I need not enter into the history and establishment of the Government of India. Definitely we are not a conquered people. It has taken the Rt. Hon. L. S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, all this time to see this obvious historical fact and as the British go away from this country they cannot be allowed to *scorch* our earth by destroying the priceless attribute of unity which they themselves felt necessary to strengthen (not create, mind you) and this effort, if it is seriously made, we have to resist with our lives.

"An India rent in twain, scattered into many *Sthāns*, each independent of the other and weakened in the process can hardly stand up to any foreign invader. It is fundamental for the defence of India that she should be under one Government. It is not only unjust, but a blunder, a suicidal blunder, that India was not allowed her own defence and that if she had been permitted to develop her own military, naval and air forces, she, the most populous country in the world, next to China, would now easily enable England in her glorious mission of destroying Hitlerism and saving mankind. The present War has shown on what scale and over what immense area defence has to be organised if it is to be successful. I would plead for the putting down of all separatist movements which are really seditious in nature, and

for the deliberate fostering of Indian patriotism wedded to the concept of an Indian nation. The separatists have obscured this patriotism for the time being to some extent but that is the only genuine feeling cherished by the masses of this country and it alone should be encouraged for the good of India.

"It is very strange for Mr. Jinnah to say that a people who have given asylum to all persecuted peoples in the world from time immemorial will ill-treat their own fellow nationals, the Muslims. The whole claim is founded on fallacious reasoning and wrong facts. Mr. Jinnah will certainly not be allowed to get away with his idea of carving out a state founded on hatred and distrust of large sections of the people of this country who have done no wrong to the Muslims to deserve all this well advertised evil reputation as though of an aggressive and cruel majority trying to insult and suppress the Muslims.

"Whatever the final solution of the Indian problem the fact is fundamental that India must remain United, a Unitary and a Single Nation and she must be free in fact. Our people can no more be cheated by catchwords and specious promises, and the Congress Working Committee's response to Sir Stafford Cripps's Proposals is proof of this. It must be now our aim and it must be the final decision of the British Statesmen that the people of the entire country, irrespective of race, creed, colour or even education would have rights of citizenship and equal rights and that the Government of India would be the government 'of the people, by the people, for the

people'."[1] He further insisted that England, without caring and waiting for a universally approved settlement from India, should bestow at once a truly democratic constitution upon her where the minorities would have representation in the proportion which their population bears to the entire population of the country.

The failure of the Cripps Mission sounded a note of warning to the people of India that it was not up to them to wrest freedom from the British unless united. The Country was preparing for the struggle against British Imperialism. Meanwhile, the Muslim League, vociferous in its demand for Pakistan, took an uncompromising stand. C. Rajagopalachari was the first to attempt to resolve the deadlock. A resolution to concede *Pakistan* in principle was approved by the Madras Legislature Congress Party. It was a shock to all Congressmen including Rajagopalachari's colleagues in the Working Committee. With this sanction behind him, he pleaded for the acceptance of his resolution by the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad.

The country was against Rajagopalachari. He met with opposition from Maulana Azad, the Congress President, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and others. Vijiaraghavachariar appealing to the All-India Congress Committee to reject the Madras Resolution said: "I have read with amazement and sorrow the resolution passed at the

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's Press statement

recent meeting of the Congress Legislature Party at Madras and the speech delivered by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, who sponsored it. The Congress was founded to win freedom for the Indian nation and how can it be a party to the sundering of that nation? The doctrine of self-determination is very much misunderstood. It does not mean any minority can claim to get out of the State and constitute itself into a separate sovereignty. To the division of a State and a people into separate sovereignties, independent in every respect of each other, the justification must lie, if at all, in some antecedent historical injustice as where the union of an independent people, who desired to get out, was effected without or against their consent. On the other hand, to the meanest student of Indian history it must be apparent that ancient India was ever a united country and afterwards when foreigners came it struggled hard to maintain that unity. Islam and Hinduism are different religions but Hindus and Muslims are one people and of one race. Mr. C. Rajagopalachari would not deny all this, but says that since the British will not enable us to secure power without a settlement to which Mr. Jinnah will agree, it is necessary to yield to him. I respectfully protest againt this method of approach to a great problem. Extend the argument and you must submit to the demands of the Rulers, the other minorities and the British commercial interests. Power without a nation at the back of it is illusory and not worth possessing; Mr. Rajagopalachari would sacrifice the nation for power. The Nationalist Muslims with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at their head have

deserved better of Mr. Rajagopalachari and the logical result of his thesis is that the Rulers and other minorities who ask similarly for self-determination should have it".[1]

The Congress leaders welcomed Vijiaraghavachariar's views. They opposed the Madras Resolution and reaffirmed their faith in Indian Unity. Rajagopalachari, in a speech which was full of force and cogency of argument, invited the Congress 'to dare greatly, confident in the forces of conservatism and inertia that provide the checks and balances so necessary in life's complicated machinery and concede Muslims their demand'.[2] 'After all', he said, 'strengthening a section of our own countrymen could do India no harm'.[3] Rajagopalachari argued that he had conceded no more than the recent Delhi Resolution of the Working Committee or what Gandhiji had stated in the *Harijan.* The Delhi Resolution stated that the Working Committee could not think in terms of compelling people in a territorial unit to remain in the Indian Union against their declared and established will. Gandhiji had said that if the vast majority of Muslims regarded themselves as a separate nation having nothing in common with Hindus and others, no power on earth could compel them to think otherwise; and if they wanted to

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's communication to the Congress President

(2) From Rajagopalachari's speech at the A. I. C. C. Session in Allahabad

(3) Ibid

partition India on that basis, they must have the partition, unless Hindus wanted to fight against such a division. Rajagopalachari contended that when one had called it self-determination for territorial units, he had faced the issue squarely by calling it *Pakistan*. He made a bold plea for the acceptance of his proposals.

The Congress leaders and the All-India Congress Committee did not see eye to eye with Rajagopalachari. Pandit Nehru's spirited opposition to Rajagopalachari's resolution, and support of Jagat Narain Lal's Akhand Hindustan (United India) resolution carried the day. Maulana Azad, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, and Yusuf Mehrally were in the vanguard of opposition to C. R's resolution. Pakistan appeared to them, to quote the words of Yusuf Mehrally, a thing which was 'politically retrograde, economically unsound and culturally ridiculous'. They were sure that Pakistan will not solve the communal question. They were for no compromise on the question of freedom and stood on the platform of Indian Independence. The All-India Congress Committee rejected Rajagopalachari's resolution by 120 votes to 15, and passed Jagat Narain Lal's resolution by 92 votes to 17.

It was a courageous stand which Rajagopalachari took, but he failed as the time was not ripe. Writes Yusuf Mehrally: "This time Rajaji came out more completely, failed to gauge the temper of the people and over-reached himself. His advocacy for conceding the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan

and asking that even if the other Provinces continued non-cooperating, a coalition ministry should be established in Madras came as a shock to all Congress-men and the A. I. C. C. promptly rejected his resolution by an overwhelming majority".[1] But Rajaji continued his advocacy.

The All-India Congress Committee called upon Britain to recognise Indian Independence and to confer real power on the Indians so that the war could have a popular backing. They directed the nation not to tolerate the Japanese designs on India but to offer resistance to the foreign invader in the form of non-violent non-cooperation. They further emphasised the importance of the Congress Constructive Programme and appealed to the people to work out the programme of self-sufficiency and self-protection.

Britain missed her opportunity. A gesture of conciliation would have resolved many things. A struggle seemed imminent. Once again the burden of launching a mass movement was on Gandhiji's shoulders. Gandhiji found no way out but to organise a nation-wide struggle to achieve our cherished goal of Swaraj. And the country awaited his call. The All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay on August 7th and 8th, 1942, to give its final directive to the nation. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in moving the Working Committee's resolution made a fervent appeal to the British for the recognition of India's rightful demands. He said that the resolution

(1) From 'Leaders of India' by Yusuf Mehrally

was not a threat but an invitation. A Free India's cooperation would bring about a vast change in India and abroad and there would be a really revolutionary change. If the British did not yield to their demand, the resolution envisaged only a conflict and a struggle. Pandit Nehru added: "We have entered the fire and we have now to come out of it successfully or be consumed by it".[1]

The Working Committee's resolution was lengthy but it dealt with the significant problems affecting our national interest as well as that of the world. It demanded the declaration of India's Independence and the establishment of a Provisional Government at the Centre when Free India would become an ally of the United Nations. Making it clear that the Provisional Government would be a composite one representing all important sections in India, charged with the definite duty of defending India against foreign aggression, the resolution stated that the Provisional Government would bear the responsibility of convening the Constituent Assembly to draft India's Constitution and suggested that India's Constitution would be federal with the residuary powers vesting in the federating units. The resolution outlined Free India's foreign policy and favoured the establishment of a World Federation.

The Working Committee declared that once the British rule was ended in India, Free India would

(1) From Nehru's speech at the A. I. C. C. Session in Bombay

assure the success of freedom and democracy by throwing all her great resources into the struggle for freedom against the aggressions of Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. If they were still held under subjection, in order to vindicate India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the Committee resolved 'to sanction starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale, so that the country might utilise all the non-violent strength it had gathered during the last twenty-two years of peaceful struggle'. And Gandhiji was requested to assume leadership and guide the nation.

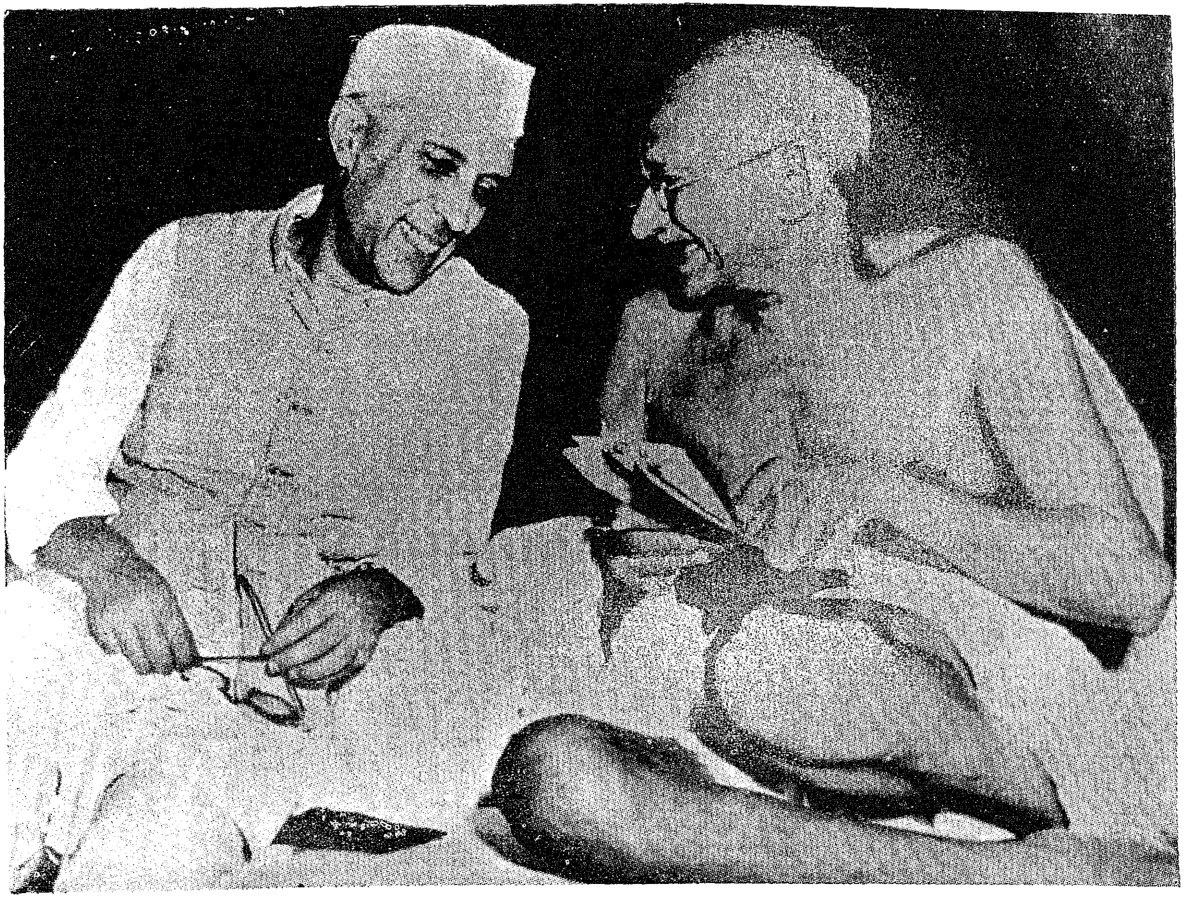
Even before the Working Committee's resolution was put to vote, the country knew that it would be approved by an overwhelming majority. It was so. The opposition to it was meagre. Gandhiji assumed leadership. He addressed the All-India Congress Committee in a memorable speech. He said: "I take up my task of leading you in this struggle not as your commander, not as your controller, but as the humble servant of you all; and he who serves best, becomes the chief among them. I am the chief servant of the Nation. That is how I want to look at it. I want to share all the shocks that you have to face".[1]

Gandhiji called on the British and the United Nations to search their hearts and find out what crime the Congress had committed in

(1) From Gandhiji's speech at the A. I. C. C. Session in Bombay

demanding Independence today. He asserted that even if all the members of the United Nations opposed him, even if the whole of India tried to persuade him that he was wrong in demanding independence, he will go ahead, not for India's sake alone, but for the sake of the whole world. He appealed to the United Nations for its active assistance in solving India's problem. Gandhiji threw a challenge to Jinnah to face an impartial international tribunal and declared that its verdict should be binding on all of them. He deprecated the two-nation theory of Jinnah and pleaded for unity among all sections of the people. 'India cannot wait any longer for her freedom and freedom shall be your mantra', declared Gandhiji. He warned his countrymen against adopting any violent method or underground activity, which, he said, was a sin. He appealed to the people to strictly adhere to non-violent methods and carry out the peaceful struggle throughout the length and breadth of India when they were called upon to do so. While congratulating the All-India Congress Committee on passing the resolution, Gandhiji advised them to act with restraint and calm. He said that he was going to write to the Viceroy before launching the movement and that everything depended on his reply. Gandhiji declared that the struggle was the last and when it was launched, they shall 'do or die'.

Gandhiji told the British to 'Quit India'. What he meant was the withdrawal of the British power from India and its replacement by an Indian



Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi

National Government which would defend the country. Louis Fischer, the eminent American journalist, stated that Gandhiji had told him in so many words that what he (Gandhi) and the Indian leaders were asking for was an Indian National Government which would not interfere with military operations, but which would immediately enter into a treaty of alliance with the United Nations for the successful conduct of the war. He voiced the Indian leaders' view that only by giving India some concession during the war and by the guarantee of complete independence after the war, that the people of India could be aroused to support the war of freedom. Gandhiji stood for peace, but peace with honour. The British Government declined the hand of friendship which the Congress so sincerely extended. The moment the Working Committee's resolution was approved by the All-India Congress Committee, British Government arrested Gandhiji and the nation's leaders, and another period of repression followed.

The ninety year old veteran statesman, Vijiaraghavachariar, was following these grave developments with concern. He wondered why the demand by the Congress for the recognition of Indian Independence and the establishment of a Provisionl Government should be met with such stern opposition from the British. He felt that these demands were legitimate and that they ought to be conceded in order to enable Indians to organise their defence against foreign aggression and to join hands with

the United Nations in destroying the forces of totalitarianism. He wired to the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, condemning the Government's repressive policy and deploring the arrest of the leaders. He was constantly thinking of the fate of our country and his mind was ever on the alert to find a solution. But he would tell, repeatedly and with emphasis, that there should be no compromise on the essential unity of India.

The year 1943 gave India anxious moments. While the British Government was ruling with an iron hand and while the Muslim League was growing in its intransigence, being carefully nursed by the British diehards, the life of Gandhiji was at stake in the Aga Khan Palace where he was under detention. Gandhiji decided to go on a fast. The Viceroy charged Gandhiji and the Congress with the responsibility for the August disturbances and said that unless they repudiated or dissociated themselves from the resolution of August 9th, and the policy which it represented, and gave him the appropriate assurances with regard to the future, he could do nothing further. Gandhiji, in his correspondence with the Viceroy, told him that the entire blame for the disturbances and violence rested with the Government of India who brought about the wholesale arrests of prominent Congressmen all over the country. The Viceroy would neither release Gandhiji and the other leaders nor permit Gandhiji to meet the members of the Working Committee. Gandhiji appealed to the Viceroy in vain and then decided on a twenty-one day

fast. The life of the Father of the Nation was in danger. The Viceroy was adamant. But there was difference of opinion in his Executive Council. The Viceroy's refusal to release Gandhiji led to the resignation of three members of his Executive Council, M. S. Aney, N. R. Sarkar and Sir H. P. Mody. Vijiaraghavachariar wired to the Viceroy demanding the immediate and unconditional release of Gandhiji. Leaders met in a Conference in New Delhi and presented a united demand for Gandhiji's release. The Viceroy turned a deaf ear to the nation. Gandhiji survived his ordeal and came out triumphantly. On the termination of his fast, the gates of the prison once again closed on him until he was released in May the nex year.

Vijiaraghavachariar was in his ninety-second year then. The ripeness of his age made for all the more ripe ideas. His interests were many, his ideas consistent. His faith in the unity of India made him aver that a United India along with the glorious land of China could play a leading role in shaping the destiny of Asia as well as in the larger context of the world. His last and parting message to the people of India was an appeal to them 'to feel and think Indian'. "It is for all Indians", he said, "irrespective of the much-abused phrase, 'caste, creed, or race', to feel and think as one and hasten the day of our national freedom, since we are one people and possess a common culture".[1] Those were the words that came

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's statement to the Press

from the heart of one, who, for over sixty years, had championed India's cause and fought many a battle for her liberation. Those were the words that came from one whose rich experience in public life was precept. Those were the words of a great statesman and patriot who warned his countrymen against fissiparous tendencies and the dangers of separation. His faith in a United India was undimmed, and he thought of Indian Unity and freedom as the two eyes of the nation.

XIV
IDEAS AND INTERNATIONALISM

Vijiaraghavachariar's vast and encyclopaedic learning combined with the ripeness of his judgment earned him nation-wide renown as a political thinker. During his long and active life he devoted himself with unremitting interest to the study and understanding of public questions of every kind. "He absorbed a succession of ideas and ideals, from those of mid-Victorian Spencer, Huxley and Mill to those of Shaw, Wells, Laski, Hitler, Stalin and Lenin of our times. He brought to bear on them his own powerful analysis and clear understanding so that in ripeness of judgement he was without an equal.

"His methods were somewhat abrupt and he used to hammer hard where gentler stimulations would have sufficed. Even when he uttered placid and innocuous sentiments, he appeared an extremist, downright and uncompromising, loud and insistent. His aggressiveness in argument was a manner of speech rather than a device to conceal cheapness of thought. He never formed his arguments except after exhaustive study and reflection and defended them with sincerity and vigour. In the perfect discipline of his mind lay the secret of the strength and virility of his power. He was intolerant of intellectual and moral slovenliness of every kind.

"The fact that his considered views were original, unusual and unpopular, that he was going against the current of popular fancies, never deterred him from giving free and public expression to them. The sovereignty of his judgment was superior to the ridicule or opposition that its expression might encounter from ignorance, hostility or prejudice. He was scarcely popular with flimsy and fussy men who were content to flout current fallacies and slogans with a profound air and vain self-assurance.

"It was indeed this authentic quality of his intellectual and moral nature that brought to him the friendship of many dissimilar persons. In spite of radical differences, he retained many charming personal contacts with leading British officials and non-officials in India".[1]

Vijiaraghavachariar believed in world unity and unrestricted contacts between the different nations and isolationism did not appeal to him. His faith in the League of Nations was undimmed and he considered the continuance of such a body as an essential factor for world fellowship. He watched with keen interest the work of the League of Nations and believed that in such an institution the future and progress of the world lay. With tireless zeal he propagated the view that India should take a full and important part in international affairs, in particular, in the activities of the League of Nations. He upheld the ideals of the League and all that it stood

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

for despite its futile efforts. As early as 1929, he appealed to the League of Nations to interfere and solve the minority question in India, and decide the dispute between India and Britain over the question of conferring Dominion Status on India. This appeared to be a novel and startling suggestion, as, since the League was founded, no one ever thought of appealing to the Institution to solve the Indian problem. On the other hand, many publicists argued that his suggestion was untenable. Events that followed have only confirmed that Vijiaraghavachariar could see well ahead of his colleagues. Fifteen years after, and before the partition of India was carried out, Mahatma Gandhi appealed to the United Nations to arbitrate on the Hindu-Muslim problem, and the Congress offered to abide by the verdict of the United Nations on this issue, an echo of Vijiaraghavachariar's suggestion of over a decade and half ago not only for a resolving of the minority problem but for some purpose where external authority had to be invoked.

The interest which Vijiaraghavachariar took in the League of Nations made him a keen student of world affairs. Even in his old age he followed the progress of nations of the world, the rise of new ideologies alien in conception to his cherished ideals of liberty and tolerance. He could not understand or abide by the pain and humiliation which nations, great and small, suffered at the hands of the Nazis in their march towards *Lebensraum*. Although the philosophy of communism was alien to his ideals, he

admired the tenacity and strength of the Russian nation. He thought England, France and the United States of America, being champions of democracy and liberty, had a right and duty to defend the freedom of the smaller nations of Europe against the forces of aggression. When France, the country which Vijiaraghavachariar intensely loved, was over-run by the mighty German armies, the old leader sobbed like a child. He loved France so much because, as he often said, it was the one country which discarded the colour and religious bar, and because it was the land of *liberty, equality aud fraternity.* His love for France developed since the time of Napoleon Bonaparte. He thought of Napoleon not merely as a great leader but as a man of the people. One story about Napoleon he was never tired of telling. When a soldier in Napoleon's army betrayed his men and was about to deliver a secret letter to his enemies, he was caught and the sentence he received was of death. The soldier's sweet-heart came to Napoleon, pleaded his innocence and begged for mercy. Though he was convinced of the soldier's guilt, Napoleon was moved and he told her: 'Here is the only piece of evidence (the letter) against your lover. And let the fire consume it. Be gone'. The soldier was set free. Vijiaraghavachariar was struck by the magnanimity of Napoleon.

That was one of the main reasons why he appealed to President Roosevelt in 1940 to come to the aid of the Allies by declaring war against Germany. To Vijiaraghavachariar, Franklin

Roosevelt appeared to be a 'Champion of Freedom and one of the greatest men of the age'. When Roosevelt and Churchill coined the phrase viz., the *United Nations*, Vijiaraghavachariar was taken by it and that very day said that the future of the world lay in a United Nations Organization. Again when President Roosevelt spoke of the Four Freedoms, Vijiaraghavachariar thought that he had given the right lead to the world. Above all, he admired Roosevelt for the signal service the latter had done by bringing to the notice of the world the Atlantic Charter which he characterised as the 'Magna Carta' of the modern age.

When the Atlantic Charter was made known to the world, Vijiaraghavachariar appealed to the British Government and to President Roosevelt to apply it to India. President Roosevelt had pointed out that it was quite wrong to confine the application of the Atlantic Charter to certain parts of the Globe and that he meant it to be applied to every continent. But Churchill, the British Prime Minister, denied its applicability to India. Vijiaraghavachariar criticised Churchill's policy and made a bold plea for applying the Charter to India. It was then that he sent a personal message to President Roosevelt through a distinguished friend who visited the United States and it was known later that Roosevelt agreed with Vijiaraghavachariar and greatly respected his views on the question of applying the Atlantic Charter to India.

Nurtured in the traditions of the great political philosophies of the nineteenth century he was a great defender of civil liberty all his life. Though he lived during those days when the liberals held the reins of political thought and action, he was an extremist. "Vijiaraghavachariar lived through those days. But he lived out of those days too. British liberalism was founded on jingoism and on the challenge of more youthful aspirants in the same field of imperial hegemony. Its eclipse was inevitable as British life permitted no longer that large and expansive complacence or philosophy. Indian liberals would naturally die with them, but they were shaken up by the sterner facts at home—the Curzonian kicks and the rebirth of that national consciousness which is called 'Swadeshi'. Indian liberals fought for their own creed and programme for another decade and half; they forgot to fight therefore for nationalism. With the advent of Gandhiji, Indian liberalism as an exotic growth was swept out. Indian nationalism spread into vigorous life. Curiously enough it remained for the last of the old generation, Sri Vijiaraghavachariar, to preside over one of the momentous sessions of the Indian National Congress, at Nagpur in 1920, where the new creed of Indian nationalism was definitely accepted. Indian Congress, it decided, was no longer to petition for self-government; it was to work for Swaraj. To the astonishment of his generation, Vijiaraghavachariar did not appear to feel either uncomfortable or dismayed. His keen, logical mind had seen where the giant-like liberal leaders had failed. The nation had outgrown the old liberal

days. So, he came to salute the age of Gandhi—even as he was called on to lead the men of Gandhi at Nagpur.

"Yet, *he* perhaps knew it better than the rest that the love of liberalism was no cant or casuistry. It too had germs in it of truth which the liberal shell cannot and must not encase. Even nationalism—the nationalism of a people which aspired for national self-determination—was no denial of liberal philosophy or programme. Old Vijiaraghavachariar brought with him in the Congress counsels the wisdom of Nestor, the easy mastery of constitutional details, and the rich knowledge of the rights and duties of the citizens of a democratic State. Congress was richer for that. So, to the last when age made him a figure of veneration, he never ceased to grow nor did he forget that essential liberal faith of his. Full of years and full of honours as Vijiaraghavachariar goes to his rest, we know that an era has ended, but we feel too that the new era is enriched by its legacy".[1]

Vijiaraghavachariar despised racial discrimination of every kind. He nourished this idea ever since his boyhood. He criticised the racial policy of the South African Government and his sympathies went to his people in that country who were subjected to discriminatory laws. He followed with interest the lessons of American history, especially the civil war in America. The American civil war had not merely brought about the union in that continent but it had

(1) Hindustan Standard of Calcutta

told the world that racial discrimination and inequality of human rights had no place in democracy. He admired Abraham Lincoln as a statesman and liberator whom, he thought, the world should hold in perpetual honour. His admiration grew all the more for him as Lincoln had acknowledged the universal equality of human rights, and the Declaration of Independence was his chart and inspiration. "Certainly the Negro is not our equal in colour, perhaps not in many other respects; still, in the right to put into his mouth the bread that his own hands have earned, he is the equal of every other man, white and black".[1] These words of Lincoln, Vijiaraghavachariar never forgot.

The conditions in China also drew his attention. He liked this great country because divergence in race or religion had not destroyed the national sentiments of the Chinese people. While he regretted the fate of the Chinese constantly engaged in wars and unfortunate conflicts, he thought that the entire world and India in particular had much to learn from them, especially their economic life.

He studied public questions with insight and earnestness bringing to bear on them his deep erudition and powerful judgment. He was well equipped in politics, economics and other social sciences. On economic questions, his views were progressive. State Socialism appealed to him as the best guarantor of fair deal to all. For the amelioration of the lot of the

(1) From a speech of Abraham Lincoln

toiling millions of the people, he considered the arrangement of our country's finance as the first and foremost measure. The true principle of taxation, in his view, should be that everybody's surplus income and surplus produce alone should be taxed. His views anticipated the recent efforts at settling the land as the property of the tillers.

In his Draft Swaraj Constitution Vijiaraghavachariar included several clauses covering political, economic, financial, and educational matters. He advocated State-ownership of lands and waters, mines and minerals, and other natural resources and all forms of potential energy, as well as the nationalisation of all means of communications over land, water and air under the authority and control of Parliament. While he preferred indirect to direct taxation, he thought that the necessities should be lightly taxed if at all. He suggested various means of eradicating illiteracy in our country. The British rule in India had done little in this matter. In this respect, he was struck by the conditions in Japan and he thought that India could root out illiteracy if she followed the Japanese precedent. He appealed to the Government of India to devise and provide special schools and special facilities for the children of both sexes of the people known as Criminal Tribes and Backward Classes, including boarding and lodging for the poor among them. He pleaded for imparting universal and compulsory education in India, a step by which alone the nation could rise high. And he incorporated in his Draft Swaraj Constitution a clause that the

national language of India should be Hindustani; but the English language should be equally recognised as an official language and that Parliament might make special provisions for the use as official language of any vernacular in addition for special areas or districts. He fought for justice with relentless vigour and sincerity. While he pleaded for the abolition of Death Penalty in India through legislation, he considered whipping to be a base method of punishment, which he also desired to see abolished. In this regard, he wanted India to follow the example of Switzerland.

He attached great importance to physical exercise and emphasised the need for military training for the young men in India with the view to build a strong and healthy nation. India, he said, should drill her armed forces in the modern methods of warfare to defend herself against external aggression. He asserted that considering the safety of India, the Government should build a defence line, like the great *China Wall*, on her north-western boundary, a proposal which he put forward before two Governors-General of India. "I allude to these instances to show that Mr. C. Vijiaraghavachariar can and does command a sensible proportion of the soundest of political thought in India", wrote Eardly Norton. His wide learning and breadth of vision helped him in his study of the various problems confronting India and the world. He was a great constitutional expert and hardly an occasion passed without his opinion being recorded. Specially, the Declaration

of Rights, as embodied in the Indian Constitution, owes its origin to Vijiaraghavachariar's *resolution on Fundamental Rights* which he sponsored and helped to pass at the Amritsar Session of the Congress in 1919.

XV

MAN OF HEAD AND HEART

During a long life worthily lived, Vijiaraghavachariar advocated that everyone should engage in the service of the nation devoting a part of his time to that service throughout his life, an advocacy the richer by his example. The lure of office and official recognition had no attraction for him. He has told some of us how he resisted them, and such instances the public may not be aware of. When he was a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, he was offered the title of 'Diwan Bahadur' which he at once rejected, and later he declined the offer of a 'Knighthood'. It was Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis who, at the instance of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, the Viceroy, sounded Vijiaraghavachariar as to what title would suit him. 'The Viceroy was told that Vijiaraghavachariar looked to other marks of favour than a title, such as substantial concession in administrative and other matters which it was within the powers of the Viceroy to extend to the people.'[1] 'He was considered both for the Madras Governor's and the Viceroy's Executive Councils. The latter he missed because Sir Valentine-Chirol started the canard that his appointment would alienate the Muslims against whom years ago he had led an agitation! Vijiaraghavachariar was very much annoyed not because

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

Sir Sankaran Nair was preferred to him, but because a totally baseless allegation of anti-Muslim bias was hurled against him behind his back. He took the earliest opportunity, as soon as he came to know of it, to disabuse the Viceroy's mind'.[1] In fact he formed some of his most fragrant and life-long friendships with such renowned Muslims as Sir Umar Hyat Khan of Tiwana, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Hasan Imam, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, Asaf Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Sir Mirza Ismail.

Maulana Azad was close to his heart and his services to the cause of India's liberation and unity won Vijiaraghavachariar's admiration. While Vijiaraghavachariar congratulated Maulana Azad on his election as President of the Congress in 1940 at a crisis in our national life, he appealed to him to secure unity in the Congress which was much more important than resolutions. 'You know', he said, 'that there are various views about what our unhappy country wants now. Always remember your famous Double Formula. I cannot at any time think of you without at the same time remembering the formula, truly original and so suitable to the conditions of India'.[2] Maulana Azad wrote: 'If I say I am thankful to have received your kind letter, believe me it would hardly suffice to express my true feelings. I have felt something more than merely thankful. What could be the subject of

(1) From an article by N. D. Varadachari

(2) From Vijiaraghavachariar's letter to Maulana Azad

more happiness to me than to find such appreciative high opinions of my humble services expressed by so venerable a person like you, who has contributed such life-long services to the country, and all the more, I am endowed with the blessings of his prayers! Even to this day, I have not forgotten the very time when on the occasion of the Allahabad Unity Conference I had requested you to stay a few days more. You had conceded to my request, and tears began rolling down from your eyes uncontrollably. The sight of those tears has left such a deep impression upon my heart that often it so happened that their recollection made my own eyes filled up with tears.

'Our destination is still far, and the way is beset with wearisome obstacles. Nevertheless, we must have to keep marching on. We are not to see whether we have gained the destination, but to continue on the journey in quest unfailingly. The saying of a Persian poet is always on my lips:

> "The pilgrim of Love can never face failure,
> Because the very keeping on the pilgrimage is in itself the greatest success".[1]

Their friendship, the likeness of their views and the regard with which each looked at the other marked a rare type of unity. They both strove hard to cement Hindu-Muslim relationship and to their efforts India owes a great debt of gratitude.

(1) From Maulana Azad's letter to Vijiaraghavachariar

Vijiaraghavachariar's close association with Sir Mirza Ismail developed into a charming friendship and the two great statesmen had much in common between them and often held similar views, especially on the fundamental question of the Unity of India. Vijiaraghavachariar was keenly interested in the affairs of Mysore State, mainly due to the influence of the Dewan, Sir Mirza Ismail, and its late ruler, His Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar, whom Vijiaraghavachariar described as a model for Rulers. While he appreciated Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar's progressive outlook, he admired the administrative capacity and statesmanship of Sir Mirza. The voluminous correspondence that has passed between him and Sir Mirza, which ranges over a long period, is interesting. When Sir Mirza relinquished his Dewanship of Mysore, Vijiaraghavachariar paid a high tribute to his statesmanship and national outlook and said: "If Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, can forget himself momentarily and will allow India to become a Dominion in the Commonwealth of the British Empire, the first Viceroy whom the King, Emperor of India, can appoint, to represent himself best, would be Sir Mirza Ismail."[1]

Deep-rooted principles guided Vijiaraghavachariar in public Life. When an attempt was made to get him agree to an unanimous election as President of the Indian Legislature he refused to entertain the idea as he was a 'no-changer'. Further, he

(1) From Vijiaraghavachariar's Press statement

strongly held the view that by being in the opposition he could serve the interests of the people better, and he well understood the anxiety of the Government to shove him from the opposition benches.

Years ago, the Maharaja of Cochin sent up his name as his choice for the Dewanship of his State. It was said that Dr. T. M. Nair, a prominent figure in the South, had arranged for this interview when the offer was made. But, Vijiaraghavachariar readily followed the advice of an intimate friend of his, Sir William Meyer, and declined to accept the Dewanship of Cochin. It was also said that the Madras Government did not agree in the Maharaja's idea as Vijiaraghavachariar was well-known to be strong-willed and there might have been difficulties in dealing with such a personality when the question of exercising paramountcy rights came up.

If ever a quality of his that helped him to steer the course in public life, it was his courage and he derived his strength from his courage. As he was cast in the mould of a giant physically and intellectually, he stood above all others, but he used his strength to defend the rights of man and further worthy causes and just ideals. He would never bow down either to racial arrogance or to an unfair deal. Three remarkable incidents could be mentioned in this connection. Once Vijiaraghavachariar was on his way to Madras. At Salem, his assistant deposited his luggage in a first class compartment in which an Englishman, Stokes, then Collector of a neighbouring district, and later, member of the

Governor's Council was also travelling. Racial superiority enveloped the Englishman and he objected to an Indian being his copassenger and saying this he removed Vijiaraghavachariar's luggage from the compartment. Vijiaraghavachariar could not bear this insult to him and his countrymen. He walked into the carriage, pulled out the Englishman's luggage, and every bit of it including his dog found its way out through the window. The Englishman was taught a lesson. Vijiaraghavachariar insisted on travelling in the same compartment to Madras, his European copassenger also joining him. They became great friends later.

At another time, Vijiaraghavachariar and a colleague of his were returning from Amritsar after attending the annual Session of the Congress. Their luggages were kept in a compartment reserved for them. While they were having a stroll on the platform, a high ranking British military officer finding that he could not secure accommodation elsewhere, unloaded their luggage and occupied their carriage. When Vijiaraghavachariar knew what had happened, he politely asked the British officer to seek accommodation elsewhere as the compartment was already reserved for them. In an arrogant way, the officer asked him to mind his business and declined to get down. At once, Vijiaraghavachariar—he was sixty-seven years then—jumped into his compartment and pulled the officer by his collar out of his seat and fiercely necked him out on to the platform. When the officer stood up in rage, Vijiaraghavachariar standing at the door-way

said: 'If you again step into my carriage, I will see you are dead on the spot!'. The military officer quietly walked away. At the next station where the officer was accorded a reception, he warmly introduced Vijiaraghavachariar to the other commanding officers as the person who had necked him out of the train earlier. Incidents of this kind have often cemented friendships in Vijiaraghavachariar's life.

At the conclusion of the historic Nagpur Session of the Congress, the delegates from the South boarded the train for Madras. President Vijiaraghavachariar was with them. At Dhond, they were informed that their carriages would not be attached to the Madras Mail as previously arranged and that they should make their own arrangements for accommodation by that train. The President and the delegates protested in vain. The Madras Mail arrived at Dhond. The President appealed to the railway authorities but they declined to do anything. Vijiaraghavachariar immediately ordered the entire band of delegates to lie down across the railway line and he himself led them. He thus put into practice the first lesson of Satyagraha, immediately after the Nagpur Resolution, and refused to move unless the railway authorities yielded. The train had before her hundreds of Satyagrahis lying across the lines! Threat or warning could not shake them. The authorities yielded and the special carriages were attached to the Madras Mail and the train left Dhond amidst huge cries of Rashtrapathi Achariar-ki-Jai! To quote a writer: 'The material concerning Achariar's life would

unfold many phases of Indian history and politics. Achariar was born six years before the Mutiny. Like Ulysses of old, he had seen and known much. He has fought with many. He has a personality cut straight from the rock of nature. When the Lion of Salem roared every autocrat quaked in his shoes'.[1]

When Vijiaraghavachariar felt convinced about a thing, he gave unambiguous expression to it. His independence was a marked feature of his character and he was never afraid of expressing his views openly, be it on the floor of the Legislature or on the public platform or in private discourse. Long ago, a Governor of Madras visited Salem. The Salem Reception Committee had decided to include fire-works as an item in the programme to commemorate his visit. Vijiaraghavachariar, who was a member of the Committee, pleaded in vain with the others to exclude this item from the programme as he thought it an absolute waste to spend money on fire-works. So, Vijiaraghavachariar dissociated himself from the Committee. When the Governor arrived in Salem, his first question was: 'I don't see my friend, Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar. What has happened to him?' When the Governor was told all about the incident, he remarked: Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is right. And if he does not come here, please tell him that I shall see him at his residence'. The officials were scared and they ran to Vijiaraghavachariar's house and begged of him to come and see the Governor.

(1) From a book on 'South Indian leaders'.

Vijiaraghavachariar could not be easily moved. In his characteristic way he told them: 'Let him come and see me here if he wants to. He loses nothing by it'. But, after strenuous argument, his friends were able to persuade him to go with them and it was said that he met the Governor when the latter had already prepared himself to go to his (Vijiaraghavachariar's) residence. The fire-works item was dropped in the end. Such was the independence of the man that he never bothered about personalities when he was convinced that he was defending a just ideal.

During his long public career, he made life-long friendships with men belonging to different schools of thought and various communities, Indian and European, Hindu and Muslim, Christian and Parsi, Brahmin and Non-Brahmin. A succession of public men from Dadabhai Naoroji and W. C. Bonnerji up to Jawaharlal and Subhas Chandra Bose learnt to regard him as a mentor. His correspondence ranging over a period of sixty years has been carefully preserved by him. Unfortunately he kept no copies of outgoing letters. If they could be collected together they would furnish a remarkable inside history of our times. He knew and corresponded with men such as John Bright and other British thinkers and statesmen who interested themselves in Indian affairs. Eardly Norton's letters to him are fascinating to a degree. With the Indian publicists like Surendranath Bannerji, Dadabhai Naoroji, D. E. Wacha, Pherozeshah Mehta, Motilal Ghose, Sir G. M. Chitnavis, Tilak, Gokhale, Ranade, Malaviya, C. F. Andrews,

Rabindranath Tagore, Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, Dr. B. S. Moonje, Vithalbhai Patel, Bupendranath Basu, Lajpat Rai, Sir Sankaran Nair, C. Y. Chinthamani, and Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai he kept himself in close touch and his correspondence provides ample material for a contemporary history. With the advent of Gandhiji in the Indian political arena, the entire outlook changed; and Vijiaraghavachariar's correspondence with Gandhiji and Jawaharlal, Rajendra Prasad and Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Rajaji and Subhas Chandra Bose reveals the respect he commanded among the later leaders of India. He has done great work in influencing the course of decisions but much of it is screened from the eyes of the public because of his natural dislike for publicity.

Despite political differences, he retained personal contacts throughout his life. He might have differed in some matters from Mrs. Besant or Motilal Nehru or C. R. Das, or even Gandhiji, but his affection and regard for them remained high and he never swerved from his loyalty to the Congress which he had helped to found. It was significant that Gandhiji wrote to him once: 'Is it not well, that although our views differ, we can retain our affection and old friendship unimpaired?' His correspondence with Gandhiji is a valuable record by itself. Those who had the fortune to go through it would know the great respect with which Mahatmaji treated Vijiaraghavachariar and how much valuable material concerning the progress of events in India could be unearthed

from those letters. While Vijiaraghavachariar was feeling that he was unable to take active part in politics due to advancing age Gandhiji took every opportunity to remind him that the country needed his services even from his bed. In his characteristic way, Gandhiji wrote to him: 'Dear friend, who says you are old? I am young enough to be your son.' and prayed that he (Vijiaraghavachariar) may live to see India free. Gandhiji quite often emphasised the importance of the spinning wheel in his letters to Vijiaraghavachariar and expressed his fervent hope that the people would whole-heartedly take to spinning. In one of his letters he says: 'My temple today is the spinning wheel through which I see the possibility of bringing a ray of hope to the crumbling cottages of India.' Vijiaraghavachariar and Gandhiji held similar views on the question of *Khadhi*. He agreed with Gandhiji that unless *Khadhi* was given its proper place in the industrial life of our country, the cottages in India would crumble down and the country's economy would be hampered. He described *Khaddar* as the badge of Indian economic advancement as it formed a vital part of the village economy.

Though far advanced in years when compared with his successors, Vijiaraghavachariar maintained close personal contacts with Jawaharlal and Subhas Chandra Bose, whom he held in great regard and affection. Jawaharlal, on receiving his felicitations when he was elected President of the Congress in 1929, wrote to him in the most affectionate terms: "It is very good of you to send me your message of

congratulations. It does require an optimist to hope that I shall rise equal to the occasion. I myself feel very unhappy about it. I tried my utmost to induce Gandhiji not to force me to the Presidential Chair. But as you know he is very obstinate at times and he would not agree. As to what I shall do, it is more than I can say at present. All of us, I suppose, have to proceed according to our own lights. Those lights may be dim but in an endeavour to shape one's course any other means is seldom successful." And learning that Vijiaraghavachariar was unable to attend the Lahore Congress over which he presided in 1929, Jawaharlal wrote to him: "I am indeed very sorry to learn that you will not be able to attend the Lahore Congress. Believe me that those of us who are younger have the greatest admiration for those of our elders who have worked for long years for the country's freedom. It matters little that we do not see eye to eye with them in many things. But their presence itself is an inspiration. I am sorry therefore that your well-known figure will be absent at Lahore." Vijiaraghavachariar knew Jawaharlal from his childhood. Jawaharlal's international outlook appealed to him and he repeatedly told his friends that a person like him, with such a broad and progressive outlook, would decidedly lead our country to her proper place in the larger context of the world, which has since proved true to his letter and spirit.

Vijiaraghavachariar admired Subhas Chandra Bose for his qualities of leadership and outspokenness. Subhas struck him as a man of action. Writing to

him in December, 1937, from Badgastein in Austria, Subhas Chandra Bose says: "I need hardly assure you that any advice coming from an experienced statesman like yourself calls for the most earnest consideration—even if our conclusions do not always coincide. So far as I am concerned, I cannot tell you how much beholden I am to you—for the affection you have uniformly bestowed on me even at a time when I was under a cloud and many friends had deserted me." In another letter from Geneva, he says: "Regarding your good self, it will be an honour to me to have the privilege of nursing you—as much as in the case of the late Mr. Patel—should I have the privilege of doing so. Nevertheless, I do hope that you will still be spared many, many years in order to serve the country you have loved so much. In spite of your gray hairs, you have retained wonderful freshness, both of body and of mind."

Vijiaraghavachariar had a large circle of friends among Englishmen. Lord and Lady Hardinge became his life-long friends. Lord Hardinge wrote to Vijiaraghavachariar from London in September, 1916: "My dear friend, I was very pleased to receive your letter of the 24th August; but at the same time it was with regret that I learnt that you had not been re-elected and that you are no longer a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. This fact reconciles me the more easily to being no longer President of that distinguished body, for I should have felt deeply in a new

council the absence of friends like yourself, for I always knew that, even if our opinions differed, which happily was rare, you would never be perverse, and that your motives were always inspired by the highest principles. I knew also that my wife, in whose opinion I had the deepest confidence, had always the highest opinion of your loyalty and high-mindedness. These are memories that one does not forget. In any case I am quite sure that, even though you may no longer be a member of the Viceroy's Council, your whole energies and efforts will be devoted to the good of your country and to the loyal support of the King-Emperor with absolutely unselfish devotion."

Vijiaraghavachariar never let an occasion fall through if he thought he could secure a benefit to his people through his influence either with the Viceroy or with any other official of the Government. There was a remarkable instance as to how he saved the life of Bhai Paramanand, the well-known Indian publicist. Bhai Paramanand, along with some others, was sentenced to death and it was due to Vijiaraghavachariar's timely intervention that his life was saved. Vijiaraghavachariar has told us how he, with this object in view, first sought an interview with Lady Hardinge. Lady Hardinge, ever since she witnessed the famous debate on the 'Conspiracy Bill' in the Imperial Legislative Council, in which Vijiaraghavachariar distinguished himself by his patriotism and high sense of duty, whole-heartedly

admired Vijiaraghavachariar. And Vijiaraghavachariar gently put forward his proposal to her and appealed that she might help him in his mission. Later, he met Lord Hardinge and successfully pleaded the case with him and saved the life of Bhai Paramanand. 'Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar is a great believer in the Englishman's sense of justice if personally put to the test, and it was his appeal to Lord Hardinge that saved the life of Bhai Paramanand and some ten others to the mortification of the then Home Member who had an all too brief spell of delicious gratification over the anticipated hanging of the condemned men in the wake of the Lahore Tribunal's judgment. Subsequently, Sir Sankaran Nair took the credit for the rescue as Member of Government, but Sir Sankaran Nair was a later arrival on the scene and was nowhere near Delhi when the reprieves were announced'.[1]

Curzon, Ripon, Wellingdon, Pentland, Erskine, among the Viceroys and Governors, Birdwood, Sir William Ayling, Sir Reginald Craddock, Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, Sir Archibald Campbell, Sir William Vincent, Sir E. Conran Smith, Sir Henry Wheeler, Sir Henry Sharp, Sir Lionel Davidson, Sir William Meyer, Sir Frederick James, Sir John Hall, H. W. Green and Arthur Todd, were his friends with whom he always kept himself in touch. No friendship was more characteristic than that between Vijiaraghavachariar and Eardly Norton and between Vijiaraghavachariar and Dr. David Duncan. Norton's

(1) From an article by Khasa Subba Rao

conversations with Vijiaraghavachariar were fascinating. They held each other in high esteem and the summers in Kodaikanal would be spent by them in the happiest manner.

In personal relations he was extremely courteous, kind and generous. If he was convinced that one was either unjust or wicked to him he was thoroughly unforgiving. As he was equally strong in his affections and dislikes, there was no length he would not go to defend a good cause or to fight a bad one. His somewhat quick temper caused embarrassments to his friends but these never affected his friendships. It happened in Delhi at the time of the famous debates on the 'Conspiracy Bill' in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1913 that a colleague and friend of his had promised earlier to stand by the people in voicing his opposition to the Government's panicky legislation. But, when his turn came, he failed to do so. On the banks of the Jumna, in his residence, Vijiaraghavachariar was playing chess with Sir Umar Hyat Khan of Tiwana when the friend entered their room. On seeing him Vijiaraghavachariar was furious and he threw the chess board in his face as the latter had not stood by him in defending the rights of the people and had gone back on his word. But, the next morning, he called on his friend and profoundly apologised to him and till the end they were good friends.

Leading public men, English and Indian, who visited Salem never missed their reverent call on and interesting conversation with Vijiaraghavachariar.

Gandhiji, on every such occasion, spent hours with the old leader discussing the problems of our country and the plan of action at his residence, '*the Arama*'. Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras, called on him twice and every minute of their conversation was spent in a most useful manner, Vijiaraghavachariar always stressing that Britain could not hold India for long and the sooner she was released from foreign domination, the better for both. Sir Archibald Campbell, the Viceroy's Executive Councillor, noted with interest that Vijiaraghavachariar's residence was a building once occupied by the old trading East India Company. Col. Muirhead, who was the Under-Secretary of State for India, came all the way to Salem in 1939 to interview Vijiaraghavachariar and during conversation with him, the Under-Secretary took copious notes to communicate to White Hall. It was significant that Vijiaraghavachariar's views commanded respect not only among the leading men of thought in India but also among high British Officials. He had corresponded with Lord Zetland, Sir Samuel Hoare and others justifying India's rightful demands and placing before them his solution of the Indo-British problem. Extracts from a letter which he wrote to Col. Muirhead in June, 1939 are given below :

"I dare say you are aware that old age requires for its sustenance agreeable recollections of the past, more, a great deal more, than actualities of the present. Among such, permit me to say that your calling on me and conversation occupy a foremost place, for which I ever feel very grateful to you.

"This fact need not and cannot prevent me from taking a very melancholy view of the state of public affairs affecting British India. Lord Zetland's strange speech that British Imperialism benefits India more than any other would, is deplorable. I do not know if I should compare him to a slave-owner or wife-beater. Well, we all know that slave-owners of Negroes of America often told them that they struck them less frequently and less severely than other slave-owners. Similarly, husbands in India who beat their wives periodically find consolation in the statement that they beat them much less frequently than their brothers and neighbours. When the wife finds her way to reply whether both these sets of husbands and wives are not quite inferior to the pairs who most cordially love each other, and no occasion ever arises for either to rebuke the other, no reply comes and no reply worth having can possibly come. As a fact, the truth of it may be questioned at least in one instance. Indians in French India enjoy political privileges almost equal if not fully equal, to the white French subjects. You may easily verify this. Apart from this fact, Lord Zetland seems to think that we Indians are ever bound to be subject to some imperialism or other. In the name of God, wherefrom did he derive such a proposition? Well. It would be an insult to your understanding if I think of arguing out this broad proposition. Speeches of this kind increase the number of those Indians who desire to break away immediately from all connection with England. I have already told you that it is English statesmen of this stamp that are responsible for the

origin and development in India of the idea of absolute separation from England. It would occupy enormous space if I venture to place before you the advantages to England if she should at once place India in the Statute of Westminster as a 'Dominion' and drill her up fully equal to any independent nation in the world so that the axis of Mussolini and Hitler would not continue long to think of becoming aggressors of the world, specially of England and France. The speech of the Russian Minister Molotov is full of inspiring lessons for England to adopt towards India. If India is at once raised to the status of a Dominion and conscription is introduced, she will soon develop a magnitude of strength superior to the strength of the United States of America as a British Ally. It is strange, extraordinarily strange, that great England does not think of so simple an idea of adding to her strength which would certainly be a menace to the Axis powers now and for ever. I am one of those few who think most conscientiously that this world would be very incomplete without the existence of England."

Vijiaraghavachariar's heart was as big as his head. His sympathies for the poor and the downtrodden were well-known. He championed the cause of the depressed classes. The principle of equality, according to him, should be the foundation on which we should raise the structure of our society. He maintained that all men were essentially equal irrespective of creed, colour or caste. Even as a student he cherished the idea that the divisions in

Hindu society into castes and sub-castes were sure to affect its solidarity and create mutual distrust. He was convinced that one section of the Hindus had no right to look upon another as untouchable. He mixed freely with everyone. When he visited Calicut in 1900 as President of the Madras Provincial Conference, he made it a point to visit a class-mate of his who was a 'Thiyya' from Malabar. The Brahmin colony where he was staying scandalised him for his visiting a 'Thiyya' and this disapproval was so marked that he left the colony to stay elsewhere but continued visiting his old class-mate. When the temple-entry movement was inaugurated in the South, thanks to the efforts of C. Rajagopalachari, Vijiaraghavachariar gave his warm approval to it. Writing to him from Madras on the 12th October, 1932, Rajagopalachari referred to 'his warm and hearty approval in the matter of temple entry for the depressed classes' and asked him to join the influential and important signatories to a manifesto which was published then. Earlier, Vijiaraghavachariar had rendered great assistance to Swami Shradhananda in connection with the work of the Anti-Untouchability League for which he had given substantial financial help also. He had supported numerous friends and relations for well over half-a-century and had come to the rescue of many both in his family and outside. His charities are practically unknown to the general public as he disliked publicity. When, after the World War I, Russia was stricken with famine and pestilence and thousands died of starvation, Vijiaraghavachariar's sympathies went to the far-off land

and two ship-loads of Burmah rice were sent in his name to Russia and the Russian Foreign Office acknowledged his magnificent gift with gratitude. During the formative period of the Congress he was regularly sending money to London in favour of Congress propaganda in England and in order to conduct its work. He had supported many other public charities. How many people have known these facts?

He valued discipline most in his life. He was incapable of envy or hatred. Though his quick temper was a natural weakness, his kind heart very often conquered that weakness. He observed punctuality in all its strictness and never liked others to break it. Once, when Sir Arthur Hope, Governor of Madras, called on him, he arrived late by twenty minutes. On receiving him, the first remark which Vijiaraghavachariar made was: 'You are late by twenty minutes and have kept me waiting!'

He met everyone who called on him irrespective of his status or calling and he received the visitors at any hour even though it was late in the night. He attended to the comforts of his guests himself and would carefully note if they were served with food to their taste. He was clean in his habits; he insisted on cleanliness being observed in the kitchen of his bungalow which he often inspected, sometimes to the annoyance of those in charge of it. He attached great importance to Hygiene in public and private life. It must be remembered how, though in his eighties, he travelled over a thousand miles to

Haridwar and with great difficulty prevailed upon the Municipality not to throw dirt in the Ganges. He was also the originator of the scheme in Salem District which aimed at affording relief to patients suffering from leprosy and lung diseases in South India, mainly on the indigenous system, but also adopting some of the modern methods.

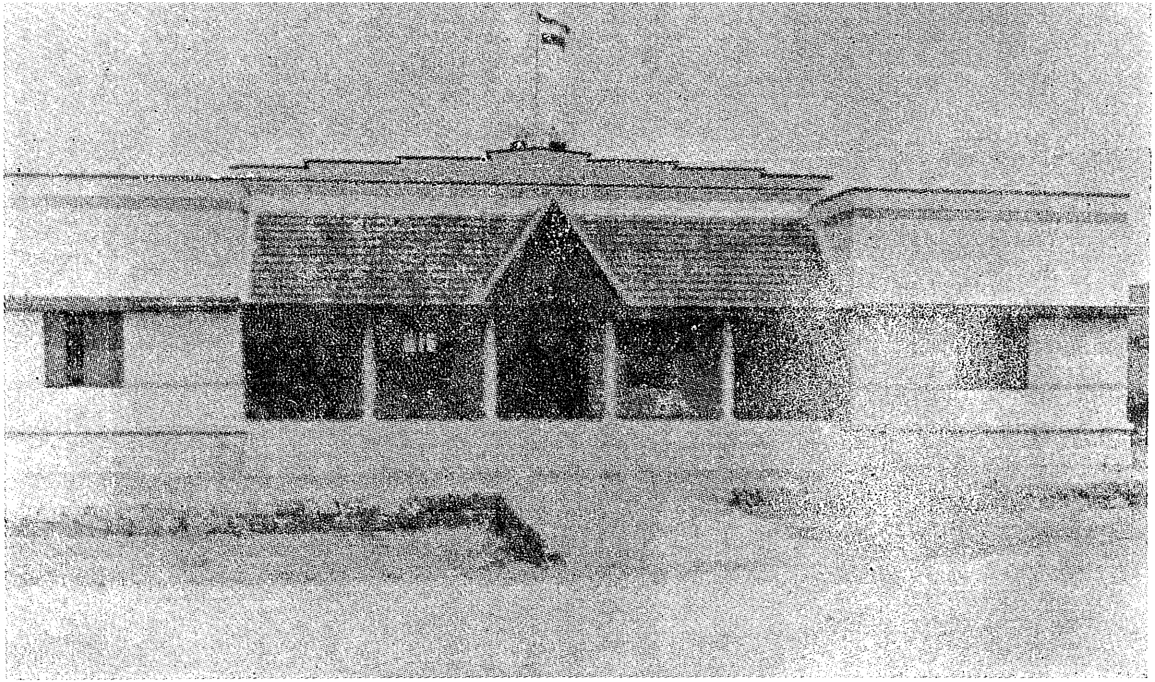
He could ride and swim well and was a good wrestler in his younger days. Once, when he was going in a small country craft with a bag of rice and was accompanied by his old mother, the Palar river rose suddenly and the boat capsized. He kicked out the rice bag and taking his mother—not a light burden—on his back swam to the bank. Physically he was very strong. Once, in the Madras Cosmopolitan Club, two of the waiters found it difficult to carry his huge box upstairs. He laughed at them and himself carried it upstairs.

Games like Tennis and Cricket, Chess and Cards interested him. While young, he had played cricket, and until he was sixty or more, he had his game of tennis in the evenings. He followed the progress of Indian Cricket with keen interest and often expressed the view that our cricketers, although individually were able players, lacked the quality of team-spirit and it was time that they built it up. He never missed reading C. G. McCartney's cricket articles in 'the Hindu'. He was a master of 'bridge' and a capable player at chess. In later days, he regularly visited the Salem Literary Society to spend

the evenings at the card table or to meet his friends who gathered around him to listen to his chat.

Vijiaraghavachariar was a voracious reader. It is unlikely that he read any novel. The books that he read would bear pencil marks in red and blue and he always made notes of what he read. He would never skip over the pages in a hurry to finish the book. History was his favourite subject and Literature too interested him. He was fond of re-reading Shakespeare's *Othello* and Milton's *Paradise Lost.* Some of the lines of *Paradise Lost* he never forgot and could reproduce them from his memory with remarkable accuracy even in his ninety-second year! He studied Political Science and Constitutional Law with zest. He read regularly the Hansard Parliamentary Reports and this knowledge was of great value to him as a legislator. His library which he has carefully preserved for seventy years and more includes the works by renowned authors on all subjects of interest, and it has since moved to the premises of his National Memorial in Salem, all intact.

While a greater part of the year would see him in the plains either at professional work or in public service, he would never miss to spend the summer in Kodaikanal his favourite hill resort, with his family. Even there he would not remain as if enjoying an idle holiday but would continue his regular habits. Punctually at half-past seven in the morning he would begin his walk towards the beautiful lake, a distance of about two miles and when he reached his boat-house, it meant the clock had struck eight! An hour



C. Vijiaraghavachariar Memorial

TOWN HALL AND PUBLIC LIBRARY IN SALEM

and half's rowing, the usual rest in the boat under the shade with his books, and his return home at about eleven after a good climb up the hill meant his morning's work was done. He used to row his boat with great vigour even in his eighties. 'Hallo, old man', he once shouted to his friend, Cotton, then the Resident of Travancore, 'come on, let us have a boat race', and they raced. Vijiaraghâvachariar won. The afternoons would see him busy with his correspondence and at his study. He enjoyed his study best when basking half exposed to the sun, resting on a lounge. And the evenings would take him to the post-office nearby to get his mail.

His bungalow in Kodaikanal, *FAIRYFALLS VIEW*, is situated in a picturesque locality at a height of about 7500 feet. His residence used to be a centre of activity in the evenings. Whenever he did not visit the Indian Club, his friends used to convert his home into a club and the card table was the focal point. Even at cards, Vijiaraghavachariar was a fighter. He could not for one moment stand his partner in 'bridge' playing a wrong game. He would burst out in excitement, often to the annoyance of his friends. But they knew well that his stern features concealed a warm heart and an intensely affectionate disposition.

After the gathering dispersed, he would have his dinner and then would come the usual fire-side chat with all of us in the family. Sometimes, he would play cards with me and my sisters, Vijayalakshmi and Soundra. He liked best to play with my

elder sister, Vijayalakshmi, as she is the cleverest of us and committing lesser number of errors than we did! Or, sometimes he would recall some of his old reminiscences and what an interesting conversation we all had! The seriousness of his conversation was tempered with a keen sense of humour. He loved a joke with those who were intimate with him. In his summer resort he cultivated a wide circle of friends, Indian and English, official and non-official. The late Maharaja of Nabha, who was kept as a State prisoner in Kodaikanal by the Government, was one of his chosen friends.

The summer in the hill was the best part of the year for Vijiaraghavachariar. He often emphasised that he was able to maintain excellent health mainly because of his regular habits and physical exercise, especially his boat-rowing. He liked to have steam-bath twice a week and rested for a while after a meal. Even in his eighty-third year—that was in 1935 which was his last visit to Kodaikanal—he never missed his exercise or the hour in the boat or the evenings at the card table. Once, when he was asked as to what was the secret of his life, he replied: 'I never miss my exercise. I eat to live and not live to eat'. Such disciplined life carried him through the long span of ninety-two years. It was remarkable that he maintained an excellent health even at such a ripe age. All his natural teeth but one were intact and he could read and see without spectacles! In an unfortunate accident at the age of ninety his right thigh bone was fractured at the neck

of the femur and to the astonishment of surgeons he was able to walk again within a few months after the mishap!

Long life is a gift. But longevity and health can be well preserved with care and nursing. Vijiaraghavachariar was fortunate in his wife, Lakshmi, who took great care of him throughout his life. They had an only child, Sita. Sita has inherited many of the qualities of her illustrious father. In the evening of his life, she was a source of strength to him. Lakshmi has lived a life of service and devotion to her husband. By her sweetness of temperament and patience she would bear with Vijiaraghavachariar's quick temper and lovingly and dutifully nurse him like an ideal Hindu wife.

In a public life lasting sixty years and more, Vijiaraghavachariar never surrendered a principle nor paltered with his conscience for place or power. His character, integrity and courage carried him magnificently through the period of struggle and turmoil. "Barring politics, Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar did not have other interests in life with the result that in his retirement he found it difficult to pass his time; for, he had a passionate longing to join the battle of freedom, though he was without the power to do so. Collectors, Judges and Governors-General used to be afraid of Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar. His services to the nation had gone into the records of Indian history. In judging of him, we should not take into consideration the old man of ninety years

but the man himself as he was in the prime of his life".[1] "Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar was a man hewn out of the solid elementary rock of character. Somehow or other, he seemed to have passed out of school and college and all through the rough and tumble of life without all these things polishing him, so that to the end he was a rough diamond—but he was a diamond".[2] Vijiaraghavachariar dedicated his life to the nation. He was a patriarch whose heart was as capacious as his intellect was massive and his features were statuesque.

(1) From a speech by C. Rajagopalachari

(2) From a speech by Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri

XVI

LAST DAYS

The dawn of the year 1944 witnessed the end of an era. The era was full of significance and events of cardinal importance as it passed through great strides from the plains of petition and prayer to the foreign ruler, to the springboard of bloodless revolution which has carried the people of India to their cherished goal of SWARAJ. Many have worked for it. Many have undergone suffering and sacrifice in the stand-up against British Imperialism. If today we reap the fruits of Swaraj, it is the fruit that has grown out of the labours of those patriarchs like Vijiaraghavachariar who dedicated their whole life in the cause of our motherland.

Vijiaraghavachariar took a very large part in the struggle of Indian manhood against foreign domination. He had done illustrious service to the cause of civil and political liberty for over sixty-five years, a record unequalled in Indian history. Till the end, he maintained deep interest in national and world affairs. The freedom of India was constantly in his thoughts and his mind was ever on the search for a solution to our country's problems. Neither his old age nor failing health would take away his mind from our country's freedom. Even in his last days, he was pining to see India free,—a freedom for which he had, hand in hand with the nation's

renowned sons, worked so hard and so long. The Congress held the foremost place in his thoughts and he asserted that it had the right to speak for India as a whole. If there was one who was utterly loyal to the Congress ever since its inception, all through its vicissitudes and till the last day of his long span of life of ninety-two years, it was Chakravarti Vijiaraghavachariar. When he died, he died with the names of India and of Congress on his lips.

On the evening of the 18th April, his daughter, Sita, noticed something strange about Vijiaraghavachariar's breathing. Doctors were called in but they pronounced his condition to be normal. The 19th morning passed on as usual. At noon when he declined to take his usual quantity of food, Sita asked him as to what he was going to do. Surprisingly enough, he replied: "I am going to die to-day". This he repeated twice. And he asked her to take care of everything. No one ever thought that it was to be his last day on earth. He was seen praying with folded hands and repeatedly uttering the name of 'Sri Rama'. At about two o'clock in the afternoon coma set in. He never recovered consciousness. Doctors administered oxygen but in vain. The end came suddenly at 6–45 in the evening. It was peaceful. His wife, daughter, grand-daughters and other relations were at his bed-side. The news of Vijiaraghavachariar's death spread like wild fire in the City of Salem, and thousands poured into his residence to pay their last homage to their departed leader. Over ten thousand people marched the next

noon to the ghat where his last rites were performed, carrying with them tri-colour flags and heaps of flowers and garlands, and shouting 'Rashtrapathi Vijiaraghavachariar-ki-Jai'. It was a day of national mourning. The Nation paid its last tribute and honoured its Grand Old Man.

That marked the end of an era. Vijiaraghavachariar was born at sun-rise on the 18th June, 1852, and he died at sun-set on the 19th April, 1944. Nearly a century had passed in between the rise and setting of his life, a period that had been remarkable in the history of India; for, it was then that the rise and growth of Indian Nationalism was recorded and it exhibited itself in all its splendour and strength until the shakles of foreign yoke were cast away. Vijiaraghavachariar had played a vital part in shaping the destiny of India. His services have gone into history. He was a great thinker and patriot. He was a great fighter for our liberty. He was a great defender of justice. He championed the cause of the people. He was the author of *Fundamental Rights* which he strenuously advocated. In everything that he said or did he was guided by high principles. His motto *Action is thy Duty, Fruit is not thy Concern* well suited him in his life of service. To have been born in the mid-Victorian era, to have nursed the growth of Indian Nationalism from its infant stage, to have helped to found the Indian National Congress and presided over its momentous session in history which heralded the advent of Non-Violent Non-Cooperation as basis of

national struggle, to have been an indefatigable fighter against everything evil, unnational and undemocratic, to have been a Champion of Unity and a great exponent of United India, and to have striven and struggled hard with courage and candour, with undiminished intellectual and moral integrity, for the cause of freedom, justice and fundamental rights of man is a record which falls to the lot of very few. That was the life of Chakravarti Vijiaraghavachariar. May his life be a source of inspiration and an example to the people, to enable them to build a glorious future for our great and ancient country !

XVII

THE ACHIEVEMENT : A RESUME

Many months have elapsed since these lines were written. During these months much has happened in our country's life. The 'Quit India' movement of the Congress had shaken the foundations of British rule in India. The incarceration of the nation's leaders resulted in outbursts of violence and mob fury, with no leader left outside jail to advise, direct and control the mob. The Government's repression only deepened the nationalist feelings. The strength of popular agitation, the rise of the I. N. A.[1] and the trend of world events compelled the British government to change their attitude towards the question of Indian freedom. Gandhiji and the Congress leaders were since set free. After many conferences between the leaders of the principal parties and Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy, an Interim Government with Jawaharlal Nehru as the Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council was formed. A British Cabinet Mission[2] visited India to resolve the deadlock but its plan did not secure the approval of the major political parties here. Meanwhile, the Labour Party had swept the polls in Britain and it was left to Prime Minister Clement Attlee and

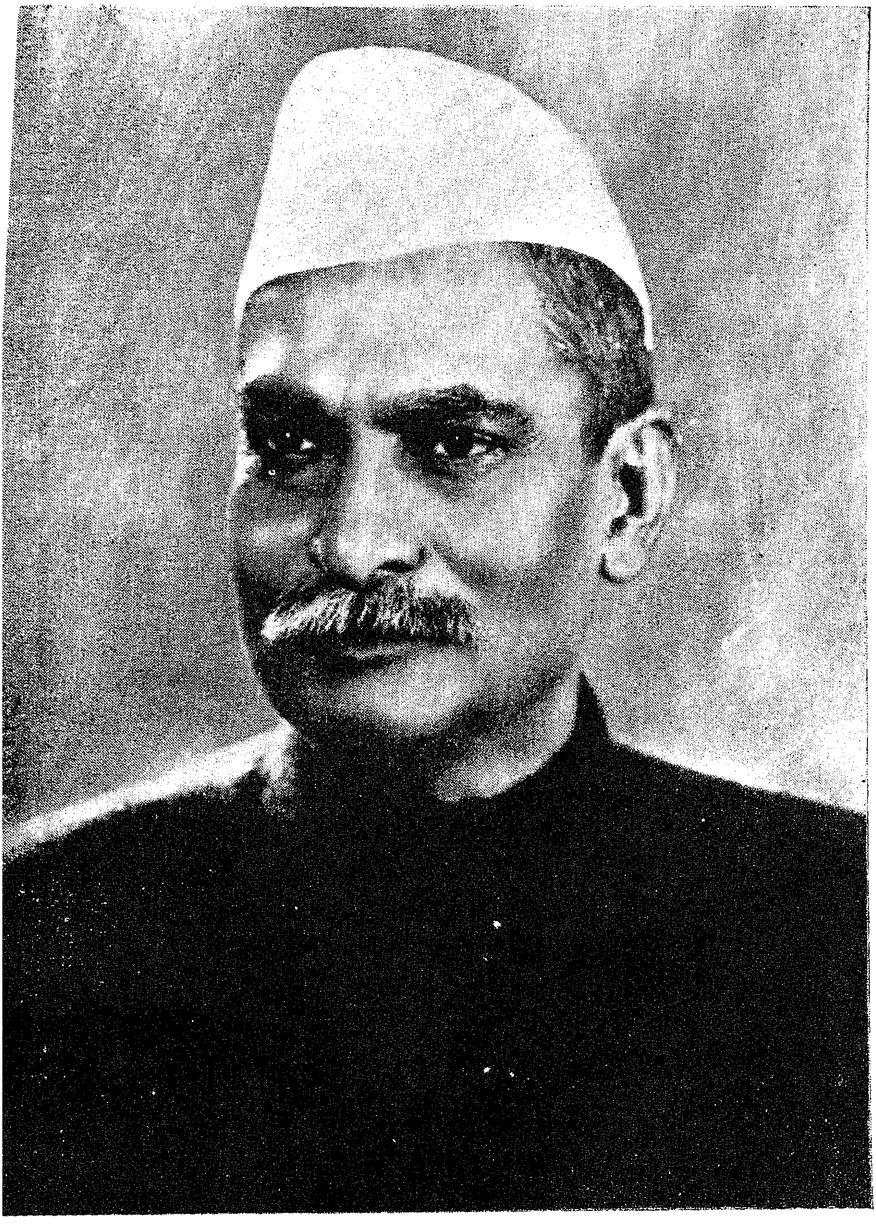
(1) Indian National Army

(2) The Cabinet Mission consisted of Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander

his Cabinet to devise a new policy. The British government decided to transfer power to the two sovereign States of India and Pakistan and Lord Mountbatten was appointed Governor-General to effect the momentous change.

On August 15, 1947, *de facto* power passed into our hands. The Constituent Assembly was elected. With Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its President, the work of Constitution-making began. Lord Mountbatten left India and C. Rajagopalachari became the last of the Governors-General to guide our destinies. The labours of the Constituent Assembly resulting in the framing and adoption of our Constitution on January 26, 1950, which ushered in India into the comity of nations as a Sovereign Independent Republic with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its first President and the great work of Sardar Patel of integrating the Indian States with the rest of India are landmarks too recent to be emphasised or recounted in detail.

On us of the present generation and the unborn Indians of future generations on whom will rest the task of raising our country to the status, which our forbears dreamed and laboured for, a deep debt of obligation lies to those who made possible our freedom. It is to those giants of our early nationalism that we owe everything. It is their efforts which have resulted in our freedom. It is their efforts which brought about this freedom in a spirit of friendliness with the British. It is their efforts and worldly wisdom which are enshrined in the notable preamble to our Constitution



DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD

PRESIDENT OF THE INDIAN REPUBLIC

as well as in the detailed provisions thereof. It is easy to scoff at western ideals of liberalism from which our leaders of the past drew inspiration and which they aspired to apply to our country. It is easy to accentuate the present and to magnify the events of the immediate past as achievements but in the continuity of history it is the beginning and early progress of any movement that matter more, not its fruition. If Indian Nationalism triumphed with its philosophy of liberalism and non-violence we owe a great debt to those giant leaders like Hume, Wedderburn, Vijiaraghavachariar, Tilak, Bannerji, Motilal Nehru and Gandhi. Throughout his life Vijiaraghavachariar stood for a strong Unitary Constitution for India, her reavowed freedom from alien domination, accent on Fundamental Rights as an integral part of a written Constitution, friendship with Britain and respect for her ideals, and last but not least, a healthy respect for law and legality. It is quite unnecessary to look for these in our Constitution, in the building up of our inchoate traditions of sovereign independent life, in our friendliness with Britain. One could easily exclaim of Vijiaraghavachariar: 'Ecce Homo'. Vijiaraghavachariar and those of the past do not want our gratitude. It is in the remembrance of our obligations to our departed leaders we shall in some measure be true to ourselves. If this book does help this, even to a slight extent, it shall be deemed to have in a measure discharged the obligation to a great Indian.

20349

INDEX

A

Aga Khan, The, 206.
Ajmal Khan, Hakim, 88, 105, 108, 110, 126, 221.
Alexander, A. V., 251.
Ali, Asaf, 143, 221.
Ali Brothers, 50, 108.
Ali, Hyder, 62.
Ali, Maulana Mahomed, 56, 67, 88, 102, 105, 108, 117.
Ali, Maulana Shaukat, 56, 142,.
Ambedkar, Dr., 134.
Amery, L. S., 181, 188, 195, 223.
Anandacharlu, P., 33.
Andrews, C. F., 38, 95, 228.
Aney, M. S., 123, 143, 207.
Ansari, Dr., M. A., 105, 109, 110, 115, 121, 123, 125, 221.
Argo, Francis, 6.
Attlee, Clement, 251.
Ayling, Sir William, 234.
Azad, Maulana Abul Kalam, VIII, 117, 124, 142, 153, 188, 189, 197, 198, 200, 221, 222.

B

Bacon, 22.
Bajaj, Seth Jamnalal, 67, 105.
Bannerjee, Babu Surendranath, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 39, 40, 44, 228, 253.
Bashyam Iyengar, Sir V., 19.
Basu, Bupendranath, 40, 229.
Ben Spoor. 38, 102.
Besant, Mrs. 46, 47, 63, 123, 124, 164, 229, 230.
Bhagat Singh, 126.
Bhai Paramanand, 136, 233.
Bhave, Vinobha, 183.
Bhishma, 169.
Bhopatkar, L. R., 136.
Birdwood, 234
Birkenhead, Lord, 121.
Bonnerji, W. C., 32, 33, 228.
Bose, Subhas Chandra, 123, 126, 228, 229, 231, 232.
Bradlaugh, Charles, 37, 39.
Branson. S., 12.
Bright John. 228.
Burke, Edmund, 60. 75, 83.
Byron, Lord, 2, 85.

C

Campbell, Sir Archibald, 234, 236
Cannought. Duke of, 94.
Carlyle, 84.
Carslaw. Dr., 3.
Chamberlain, 46.
Chandavarkar, N. G. 32, 39.
Chatterji. Ramananda, 143.
Chelmsford Lord, 46, 47, 111.
Chinthamani, C. Y., 143, 153, 229.
Chitnavis, Sir G. M., 21, 220, 228.
Chotani, Seth, 105.
Churchill, Winston, 165, 166, 213.
Clemenceau, 99.
Coke, 22.
Cordelia, 24.
Cotton, Sir Henry 38.
Cotton, 242.
Craddock, Sir Reginald, 22, 28, 31, 234
Cripps, Sir Stafford, XIII, 171, 183, 184 187-191, 193, 196, 197, 251.
Cromwell, 85
Cross, Lord, 39.
Curzon, Lord, 40, 41, 214. 234.

D

Daljit, Singh, Sardar, 21.
Dass C. R., 53, 63, 67, 88, 105, 106, 108-110, 114-116, 118, 229.
Davidson, Sir Lionel, 34.
DeSouza, Dr. F X, 143.
Devar. Justice, 61
D'Souza, Rev. Jerome, XII.
Dufferin, Lord. 32.
Duncan Dr. David, 5, 19, 234.
Dyer, General, 52, 53, 70.

E

Edward, King, 139.
Elizabeth I, Queen, 168.
Elphinstone, Lord, 3.
Erskine, Lord, 234.
Esher, 94.

G

Gandhi, M. K., v, xi, 43, 44, 49-54, 56, 57, 63, 64, 67, 68, 72, 83, 85-89, 95, 103, 105, 109, 110, 112, 114, 117-120, 127-134, 138, 146, 149, 150, 158, 165, 170, 174, 175, 177, 182, 183, 188, 191, 199, 201, 203-207, 211, 214, 215, 229, 231, 236, 252, 253.
Ghose, Motilal, 228
Ghose, Dr. Rash Behary, 42, 44,
Gladstone, William Ewart, 37.
Gokhale, Gopal Krishna, 21, 29, 40, 170.
Gordon, 4
Govindaraghava Iyer, L. A., 45.
Green, H. W., 234.

H

Hall, Sir John, 234.
Hameed Khan, Abdul, 164.
Hansard, 242.
Hardinge, Lady, 232, 233
Hardinge, Lord, 21, 22, 29, 30, 41, 44, 220, 232-234
Hitler, 180, 195, 209, 238.
Hoare, Sir Samuel, 236.
Hope, Sir Arthur, 183, 236, 240.
Hume, A. O., 13, 32, 35, 38, 158, 169, 253.
Huq, Fazlul, 53.
Hutchins, Justice, 12.
Huxley, 209.

I

Imam, Sir Ali, 123, 221.
Imam, Syed Hasan, 48, 221.
Iqbal, Sir Mahomed, 173
Irwin, Lord, 127, 128, 130-132, 138, 165.
Ismail, Sir Mirza, 152, 221, 223.

J

Jagat Narain Lal, 200.
Jambulinga Mudaliar, C., 19.
James, Sir F. E., 167, 234.
Jayakar, M. R., 123, 134, 153.
Jayaram Chetty, 3.
Jinnah, M. A., 21, 44, 88, 89, 124, 181, 194, 196, 198, 204
Johnson, Col. Louis, 189.
Jones, Sir William, 161.

K

Kalyanarama Iyer, K., 19.
Kanakavalli, 1
Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, 50, 88, 106, 229.
Kasuri, Maulana Abdul Kadir, 124.
Kelkar, N. C., 105, 136, 153.
Kernan, Justice, 12.
Kesava Pillai, P., 229.
Khaparde, B. G., 136.
Kitchlew, Dr., 51.
Kripalani, J. B., 106.
Krishnaraja Wadiyar, 223.

L

Lajpat Rai, Lala, 53, 63, 67, 87, 88, 105, 108, 123, 126, 136, 229.
Lakshmi, 245.
Laski, H. J., 209.
Lenin, 209.
Lincoln, Abraham, 84, 164, 194, 216
Linlithgow, Lord, 171, 175, 206.
Locke, 60.
Lovery, 2
Lubbock, Sir John, 6.

M

Macartney, C. G., 162, 141.
Macaulay, Lord, 22, 23, 24.
MacDonald, Ramsey, 131.
Mahmud, Dr. Syed, 143.
Malaviya, Pandit Madan Mohan, 21, 29, 48, 53, 63, 88, 110, 123, 126, 133, 134, 136, 142, 146, 150, 170, 177, 228.
Malcolm, 24.
Max Muller, 161.
Mayo, 142.
Mazumdar, Ambika Charan, 44.
Mazzini, 122.
McDonald, General, 6.
Mehrally, Yusuf, 200, 201.
Mehta, Pherozeshah, M., 33, 39, 228.

Meyer, Sir William, 224, 234.
Mill, John Stuart, 5, 209.
Milton, 112, 242.
Minto, Lord, 42.
Mody, Sir H. P., 207.
Molotov, 238
Moonje, Dr. B. S., 102, 136, 143, 229.
Montague, Edwin, 46, 47, 54, 83.
Montaigue, 60.
Morley, 42.
Mountbatten, Lord, 252.
Mudholkar, R. N., 40.
Muirhead, Col., 236.
Mukerjee, Dr. Syama Prasad, 136.
Muller, 10.
Munro, Sir Thomas, 24.
Murari Rao, 162.
Mussolini, 238.
Muthurangam Mudaliar C. N., 157
Muthuswami Iyer, Justice, 12.

N

Nabha, Tikka Sahib, 30.
Nair, Krishnan, 40,
Nair, Dr. T. M., 224,
Naoroji, Dadabhai, 33, 34, 39, 41, 169, 228.
Napolean, Bonaparte, 212.
Narasimha Iyer, B. V., 18.
Narendranath, Raja, 136.
Natarajan, K., 172.
Nehru, Jawaharlal, vii, 108, 126, 127, 175-177, 188, 197, 200-202, 228-231, 251.
Nehru, Motilal, 53, 63, 64, 68, 105, 108-111, 113, 114, 116, 118, 119, 123-127, 130, 229, 253.
Nestor, 214.
Noguchi, Prof, Yone, 160.

O

O'Dwyer, Sir Michael, 51, 70.
Opert, Gustav, 5.
O'Sullivan, P., 12.
Othello, 242.

P

Pachiappa, 3, 5.
Pal, B. C, 88.
Pant, Pandit Gobind Vallabh, 142.
Parthasarathy, R. T., vi. xii.
Patel, Vallabhai, 115, 117, 129, 133, 134, 229, 252.
Patel, Vithalbhai, 53, 105, 109, 110, 152, 229, 232.
Patro, Sir A. P., 150.
Paul, K. T., 130.
Peacock, Sir Barnes, 24, 29.
Pentland, 234.
Pericles 82, 98.
Pethick-Lawrence, Lord, 251.
Poincare, M., 80.
Ponnuswamy Chetty, 9.
Porter, 4.
Pritchard, 18,

R

Rahimtoola, Sir Ibrahim, 21, 153, 221.
Rajagopalachari, C., x, xii, 18, 50, 105, 106, 109-111, 114, 115, 117, 130, 134, 142, 156, 177, 181, 188, 197-201, 229, 239, 246, 252.
Rajah, M. C., 134.
Rajendra Prasad, Dr., vi, 105, 106, 110, 115, 134, 143, 149, 150, 177, 179, 197, 200, 229, 252.
Ramaraya Venkatranga Bahadur, 21.
Ramaswami Aiyangar, K. R., xii.
Ramaswami Iyer, E. S., 18
Ranade, 228.
Ranganatha Mudaliar, Pundi, 5.
Rangaswami Iyengar, A., 114, 124.
Rangayya Naidu, P., 19, 33.
Ranjit, 62
Rippon, Lord, 13, 32, 234.
Risley, Sir Herbert, 26.
Roosevelt, President, 179, 189, 212, 213.
Rousseau, 60,
Rowlatt, 49, 51, 64, 86.
Roy, Naresh Chandra, 171.
Russel, Lord, 16.

S

Sadagopachariar, 1, 2.
Sankaran Nair, Sir C., 19, 221, 229, 234.
Santhanam Pandit K., 53
Sapru, Sir Tej Bahadur, 123.
Sarkar, N. R., 207.
Sarojini Naidu, Mrs., 44, 110, 120, 130, 133, 134, 150.
Satyamurthi, S., 114
Satyapal, Dr., 51.
Savarkar, V. D., 136.

Shakespeare, 242.
Shankey, Lord, 130.
Sharp, Sir Henry, 234.
Shaw, 209.
Shradhananda, Swami, 136, 239.
Shukul, Pandit, B. D, 67.
Simon, Sir John, 121, 123.
Sinha, Sachidananda, 21.
Sing Giani Kartar, 143.
Sita, iii, 245, 248.
Sitaramayya, Dr. Pattabhi, 32, 33, 44, 47, 53, 54, 86, 114, 120, 148.
Sivaji, 62.
Sleeman, 161.
Smith, Sir E., Conran, 234.
Soundra, 242.
Spencer, Herbert, 5, 209.
Srinivasan, C. R., 153.
Srinivasa Iyengar S., 110, 111, 113, 114, 120, 123, 124, 149, 153, 154, 164.
Srinivasa Iyengar, V. V., 169.
Srinivasa Iyengar, Tandoni, 18.
Srinivasaraghava Iyengar, 19.
Srinivasa Sastri, Rt. Hon., V. S., 19, 20, 246.
Stalin, 209.
Stephen, Sir James, 22.
Stokes, 224.
Subba Rao, Khasa, 116, 234.
Subba Rao Pantulu, 19.
Subbaraya Iyer, M D, 18.
Subramania Iyer G., 33.
Subramania Iyer, S., 33.
Subramania Iyer, T., 18.
Sundaram Chettiar, K., 14, 18.

T

Tagore, Rabindranath, 58, 229.
Tayabji, Abbas, 53, 130.
Tejpal, Gokuldas, 33.
Telang, K. T., 33.
Tilak, Bal Gangadar, 41, 44, 48, 49, 53, 57, 58, 60-63, 91, 108, 149, 170, 228, 25[illegible]
Todd, Arthur, 234.
Thompson, Edmund, 3, 4.
Turner, Sir Charles, 10.
Tyabji, Badrudin, 34.

U

Ulysses, 227.
Umar, Hyat Khan, 21, 221, 235.

V

Valentine-Chirol, Sir, 220.
Varadächari, N. D., 13, 21, 25, 173, 192, 210, 220, 221.
Venkatápayya, K., 105
Venkatarama Iyer, T. V., 67.
Victoria, 139, 149, 168, 209, 249.
Vincent, Sir William, 234.
Vijayalakshmi, 242, 243.

W

Wacha D. E, 33.
Wavell, 189, 252.
Webb, Alfred, 38.
Wedderburn, Sir William, 37, 39, 253.
Wedgwood, Col., 38, 88
Wellingdon, Lord, 132, 234.
Wells 209.
Wheeler, Sir Henry 234.
Wigram, H. 9.
William of Normandy, 162.
William of Orange, 162.
Wilson, Sir Guy Fleetwood, 29, 31, 234.
Wilson, President Woodrow, 99, 166.

Y

Yakub, Hasan, 106.
Youngman, 10.
Yule, David, 38.

Z

Zetland, Lord, 236, 237.

ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	FOR	READ
16	18	who	was
26	32	sence	sense
31	3	refering	referring
32	25	matter	matter'.
35	21	5-11-1900	5-11-1908
37	7	vigilent	vigilant
50	24	centered	centred
52	21	hundered	hundred
56	8	any wise	anywise
57	21	cloth	clothe
58	32	mindof	mind of
59	20	haven ot	have not
62	6	beneficient	beneficent
62	27	clevage	cleavage
67	11	deligates	delegates
73	9	that	'that
73	10	any wise	anywise
76	11	greatful	grateful
81	4	depricated	deprecated
84	28	frighful	frightful
115	30	inspite of	in spite of
120	11	severence	severance
121	16	Jhon	John
122	18	county	country
128	19	compaign	campaign
144	14	a begging	abegging
146	31	wass tarted	was started
160	28	in	an

164	4	heterdox	heterodox
166 168 168	20 2 27	Westminister	Westminster
178	9	is	was
182	7	device	devise
191	7	rediculous	ridiculous
194	8	worthwile	worthwhile
198	26	againt	against
205	27	Provisionl	Provisional
207	16	nex	next
208	5	was precept	was a precept
212	13	*aud*	*and*
227	26	Mr.	'Mr.

———

PRINTED AT THE COURT PRESS, JOB BRANCH, SALEM (S. India)